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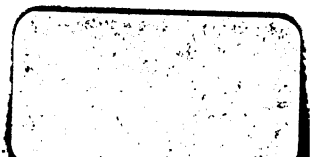

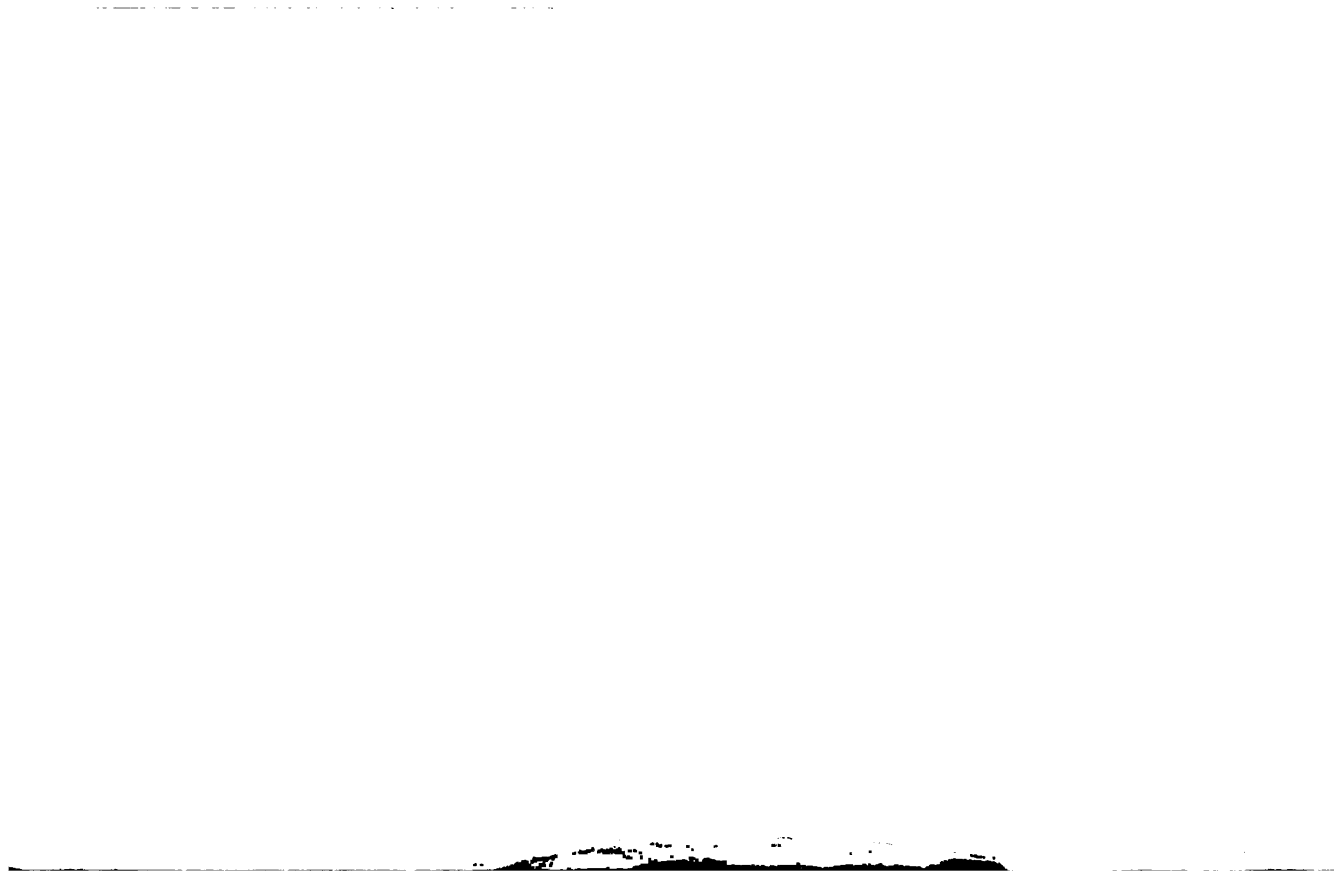

MODERN AMERICAN WRITERS

OUR POETS OF TODAY

Our Poets of Today

BY

HOWARD WILLARD COOK

NEW YORK

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1919

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I count myself in nothing else so happy as in a soul remembering my good friends:

JULIA ELLSWORTH FORD

WITTER BYNNER KAHLIL GIBRAN

PERCY MACKAYE

440546

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FOREWORD

It has been said that we are passing through a renaissance of poetry. No longer does the cartoonist of the popular comic or timely satire picture the long-haired individual with his ream of spring verse beneath his arm, a moth-eaten object for the pity of sane beings. He's as obsolete as the Dodo, save perhaps in the sacred and, thank God, limited circles of Greenwich Village, Island of Manhattan.

Today the poet has come into his own. He receives a fair price for his lines and has forced the publisher out of his traditional rut with gasps of amazement that a book of verse could be listed as a best seller.

From both artistic and commercial standpoints contemporary American poetry has achieved much. Sara Teasdale phrases it, "Contemporary American poetry has proved that this chaotic, various, intensely young, masculine country of ours is producing the best poetry that is being written in English today. I think that this has been true for only a few years but I believe it is true at this time and will continue to be so." It is about these men and women, practical purveyors of a necessary food, that this book is written.

Nowadays, instead of going abroad for many things, we look for them within our own borders. With Sara Teasdale, I agree that America today is producing poetry, some of it as fine as has been inspired by the World War.

FOREWORD

Many critics have attributed to the war the so-called poetry market. Certain it is that Rupert Brooke was largely responsible for the awakened interest in poetry in America. As a nation, not as individuals, our poetic sense had been lying temporarily dormant. This may have been due to our highly developed commercial pulse.

If a poem were the right size to fill a certain space in a magazine, the editor paid a few dollars for it. Today there are magazines devoted exclusively to the publication of these once-upon-a-time "fillers," a vindication that must be full sweet to the poet.

One of the greatest poets in the English language had to be "found" in England. I refer to Walt Whitman. He was never properly published nor generally read in his own day by his own countrymen. Yet he has immortalized democracy, and it is his spirit that has found rebirth in many of our best poets of today. To them he says:

"O to make the most jubilant poem!
Even to set off these, and merge with these, the carols of death.
O full of music! full of manhood, womanhood and infancy!
Full of common employments! full of grain and trees.
O for the voices of animals! O for the swiftness and balance of fishes!
O for the dropping of raindrops in a poem!
O for the sunshine, and motion of waves in a poem."

FOREWORD

We have been slow in recognizing our own literary genius. No nation ever has had a sweeter, finer, nobler singer of a national song, than America in Walt Whitman.

But it is not of our poets of yesterday that I have written. My purpose in this book is simply to present our American poets of today, to tell something of their lives, their writings, what they have done, and what they bid fair to do. To them we must look for the heart-beat of our times. Not long ago I heard Arthur Hunt Chute of the late First Canadian Contingent say of our present day poets, "They are fighting with us and for us."

I have endeavored to dispute here the statement that poets are for "highbrows"—they are not. Poets must rise from the people, be of the crowds, their songs must be the song of the mother who rocks her little one in her arms, of the clerk at his desk, of the student who sits alone into the morning hours, and of the soldiers in the trenches fighting for the soul of the world. They are our own people. Their writings mirror our good and our bad, our understanding and our misunderstanding, our ideals, and our belief in a God whose creed is love.

HOWARD WILLARD COOK.

INTRODUCTION

ON SOME POTENTIALITIES OF OUR POETRY

BY

PERCY MACKAYE

This book makes its entrance with a new age.

Youth is in the air—youth, the flower and seed and sustenance of poetry.

At this moment, though the world war is expiring on the verges of physical winter, spiritually peace sweeps towards us tidal with colossal spring, thawing with the break-up of old congealed forms, fluid with warm, fresh currents, fecund with plastic life.

The armistice of the nations is glorious and terrible —with spring.

What shall be the bourgeoning—tomorrow?

Outwardly, the works collected in this volume are not of that tomorrow; yet inwardly they may in some measure forecast its substance and spirit.

Here is a reality achieved, culled from that recent past which we call today. So it will be read and assayed. But here also is something latent, unachieved —a potentiality of today which *is* the new age in embryo.

Happily for embryos, they are not yet clothed in the fashions; and for potentialities there are no pigeonholes. So, leaving to the critic and scholar their

useful tasks of assaying and classifying these poems, I have accepted the invitation of the Editor to make my own comment—not on the poems themselves (for I have been shown of this volume only the list of the poets whose work is here represented), but on certain potential aspects of American poetry which seem to me important to its renascence in the tomorrow already upon us.

I feel the more free to do so because this list of poets is a list largely of old friends, many of them intimate friends; and it is to them, gathered here round the Editor's hospitable board, more than to stranger readers in the visiting gallery, that I should like to submit a few queries and suggestions which may possibly appeal to them as craftsmen and fellow workers.

And first, as workers, I wonder if we are wholly aware what hermits we are, and what too little of fellowship enters into our lives as poets and into these contributions of ours to a time (despite its world war) the most coöperative the earth has ever known —an age that, as never before, cries out for fellowship of imagination to enlarge and reconstruct the basic architecture of society itself.

In so choral an age, shall the poets still be solitary pipers? In this majestic era of socialization, shall we alone continue to represent the anarchic order of an era of individualism?

Or if, like some insects, poets be hopelessly cellular by instinct, must we gather honey only as the hermit-

wasps? May we not, like the bees, decree and build our "stately pleasure-domes"?

Here, as editor-host, Mr. Cook may assemble us in type: but to attain what common end, to build what national or international structure of imagination, do these collected excerpts of our work contribute? How are they related to one another, and to our time?

Once a year, as President of the Poetry Society, Mr. Wheeler may assemble us in person for the pleasure and inspiration of brief reunions; but what definite, creative processes of art tend to unite and focus the work of our Poetry Society members in a common upbuilding of imaginative life for America?

Let us answer frankly, and seek some solution to our answer.

Unity, harmony, focus: these great essentials of art are lacking to our national poetry. They are, however, no longer wholly lacking to our national life. The war has immensely stimulated their growth, and in that growth of our community life lies, I think, the greatest hope for our poetry.

Focus, above all: for focus leads directly to unity and harmony.

Through what definite, creative processes, then, may the work of our poets be focused?

I venture an answer—based on the growing personal experience of a decade: through the definite, creative processes of community poetry—the focalizing craftsmanship of community drama, a craft potentially vast in its variety.

But I hear the quick retort of a poet friend:—"My dear MacKaye, stick to your subject. You are writing introductory remarks to a book on 'Our *Poets* of Today'—not our *dramatists,* nor our *community architects.* I, for one, am simply a poet, and I prefer to stick to my last. That, I assure you, has its own infinite variety. As to entering the lists of community uplift—please excuse me."

P. M.: Please excuse *me.* I express myself very blunderingly.

Amicus: Frankly, you do. For all that, I gather your meaning. You want to inveigle me from my own clear task and métier—the writing of verse—into a vague maelstrom of fanfaring trumpets, bewildering lights, chaos of costumes, enigmatical actors, untangoing dancers, all helplessly entangled in frescos of civic reform; pageantry, in short.

P. M.: An apt picture of a popular conception of pageantry—and some pageants.

Amicus: Well, you should know. You write pageants yourself, do you not?

P. M.: No; I have designed some works involving pageantry. *Masques,* I call them, for want of a better name. *Community drama* is perhaps a clearer designation for the genus. But, of course, community drama is not written any more than architecture is written. It is designed; and the design may (and, I think, should) involve words—all splendid forms of spoken, sung and chanted poetry—amongst other elements. The *primum mobile* is imagination.

Amicus: All that may be; but let us stick to our p's and q's in right sequence: Poetry before Quiddity! How else shall chaos be classified? Poetry belongs to literature, and literature belongs to libraries—not to theatres.

P. M.: Libraries must have card catalogues; ***ergo,*** the human soul must be segmented—alphabetically. Or, to illustrate further: In New York City stand two statues of actors: one of Edwin Booth, the other of Shakespeare. Query: Shall Shakespeare be card-catalogued under A (Actors), or under S (Statues)?

Amicus: Under P (Poets), of course.

P. M.: And not under D (Dramatists)?

Amicus: Well, certainly not under C D (Community Dramatists). No; I agree with Yeats, that "to articulate sweet sounds together" is the true task of the poet, difficult and sufficient for all who properly go by that name.

P. M.: I am happy to hear you quote the excellent poet, who is the luckiest of all our poets of today in having a community theatre of his own sort, where he personally has been able to train the actors "to articulate sweet sounds together," and to coöperate on occasion with the excellent designer of masques, Gordon Craig.

Those words of his were also quoted by me in an address on "The Worker in Poetry," delivered in 1910, before the National Institute and Academy of Arts and Letters, and it will, I think, bear directly on

our discussion to set down here these excerpts from my address at that time:

"Roughly to define it, I mean by poetry—the perennial stuff of the racial imagination. Poets are moulders of that stuff in useful forms. And by useful forms I mean forms serviceable to the happiness of the race.

"Under such a definition, the great discoverers of the world—in science, art, engineering, medicine, religion, agriculture, what you will—may be called great poets; and such they are, for they are constructive imaginers, or inventors, who serve the race by their work. But a special class of these has usually claimed the name of poet; to wit, writers of verse. Obviously that special class is our subject, but—not to limit this class by any misleading distinction between verse and prose—I shall mean by a poet: an inventor of useful images in the emotional cadences of speech. In brief, a singer of imagination. Among such, of course, singers in verse are dominant.

"By the nature of his work, the poet seeks to stir the elemental in man—the racial imagination. This all artists seek, more or less, to do. But the singer must accomplish this by means of the uttered word. It is not sufficient—it is not even essential—that his poem be written. To fulfil its object it must be spoken or sung. It is as reasonable to expect an architect to be content with a specification of his building, or a painter with a photogravure of his painting, as a poet with the printed page of his poem. The ca-

dences, the harmonies, the seizure by the imagination upon consonants and vowels, sounds which subtly evoke the human associations of centuries—these are addressed to the ears, not to the eyes, of his audience. Originally his audience was not a person, but a people. Homer sang to all Hellas—not from the printed page, but from the mouths of minstrels. Thus the very craftsmanship of the poet is based upon two assumptions, which are seldom granted to him today: the sung, or chanted, word; a plural convened audience.

"It is not surprising, therefore, that his power with the people has waned. The inspiration of the ancient bards has never passed from the earth. It is perennial in the poet's heart. But it can never pass effectively into the hearts of the people through their eyes —from the pages of printed volumes or of magazines. No; a partial renascence of those older conditions of poetry is needed for the work of the poet. Is such a renascence feasible? Is it probable?

"Not to evoke the millennium or the golden age, I think the worker in poetry may find true encouragement in the promise of the present—and the present here in America. Foremost there exists for him one vocation whose object—like his own—is to evoke the racial imagination by the uttered word. There exists the drama. To the drama the noblest poets of the past have turned for livelihood and the fruition of their labor. At the Globe Theatre in London, Shakespeare earned both daily bread and immortality;

Sophocles both—at the theatre in Athens. Today in America the theatre—itself but half aware—is being stirred by mighty forces of rebirth, and the drama is awakening to fresh and splendid horizons. For the poet, then, in verse or prose, the craftsmanship of the dramatist already offers an actual vocation.

"Besides this, a revived form of democratic drama outside the theatre is rapidly developing new opportunities for the singer. The pageant has come to stay. Participated in by the people, from town to town, the civic pageant is being welcomed as a constructive form of expression for our national and local holidays. For this—Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Lincoln's and Washington's birthdays, present magnificent opportunities for the noblest imaginings of poets and artists. *In particular these festivals give promise of vocation to the poet as such in the revival and growth of the masque, the ballad and the choral song.*"

During the eight years which have passed since those words were spoken, personal experience has deepened a strong conviction then to a sense of certainty now. For in numerous productions of my masques in different parts of America—productions witnessed by an approximate total of a million spectators, and enacted by some fifteen thousand participants—the popular zest for forms of community poetry, the quick comprehension of broad, symbolic concepts, the eager enthusiasm and discipline of ex-

pression through rhythmic speech and song, through light and choral movement—these have presented inspiring proofs that a communal expression of poetry, comparable to the noblest of any age, awaits only the focalized initiative of our poets—these very poets of our today represented in this volume—to release their own deepest powers and interpret America fundamentally to itself and the world.

In this I would not be understood as implying that such communal forms of poetic expression would necessarily bear any close resemblance to my own designs here referred to, nor would I be construed as urging that poets—in dedicating their gifts to the creation of community art—should yoke their individual insights and methods in art to any superimposed organization of a bureaucratic régime. Such implications have no part in what I see potential in this volume.

What I see here potential is simply an extension, toward a focal centre, of those distinct individual gifts of our poets now isolated and uncorrelated. That focal centre I see as the *Drama,* because only the drama focuses and synthesizes all forms of poetry in its largest meaning as art, and only community drama completely fuses that art with democracy, which increasingly is our life in common.

Today, the roulette-table which is our theatre creates, of course, no demand for the dramatic craftsmanship of poets. The theatre does not call the poets. Well, then; let the poets call the theatre, and re-create it for themselves, as artist-spokesmen of the people.

For, after all, the community theatre of our new age—if its art is to be commensurate with the age—can be invoked only by our poets, and by the best of our poets. Despite the appeal of motion pictures (an appeal two-thirds economic), and of theatre-art productions purely visual, the drama of expression can never be divorced from speech, nor dramatic speech from rhythmic utterance—which is the realm of the poets' supremacy.

The content of this book, then, though it will generally be classed as literature for libraries and readers, is for me a lyric sign and assurance of a new literature for audiences, for whom these lyrists are even now potential dramatists of a new theatre.

Least of all among these, perhaps, Miss Lowell would admit such an implication for herself, especially in a "community" capacity. Yet I am temerarious enough to detect in the vivid and mordant etchings of her art, in the swift flashing and darkling of dramatic images silhouetted on the mind of the solitary reader, most of all, in the abundance of jettying life-force which irradiates her word-sounds with color-beams—to detect, behind these, a maker of masques, in kind all her own, that might well conjure strange, alluring patterns for audiences, convened from a community—not too numerical to be annoying.

And when may not Masters, with some unprecedented theatre technique, chisel new lives of his entombed—or Frost convene the lonely folk of his back-country regions in strange, touching festivals—that

call for fresh incarnations of the trade-worn actor?

Many, perhaps most, of the poets here represented by lyric works have expressed themselves in forms dramatic. Some of these, while yet unpublished, I have at times been privileged to hear read aloud by their authors to intimate gatherings of friends. In such personal readings aloud, and the exchange of ideas in conversation which naturally follows upon them, the potentiality of the poets and their works is far better revealed than in perusing their published volumes. So—as that potentiality is my subject—though the dramatic works of many others are doubtless as varied and significant, I can only mention here from direct knowledge those whom I have been so lucky as to hear read their plays in manuscript, still fresh from the creative impulses of their minds.

The blithe-deep genius of Witter Bynner has lately sung its soul in a play of today and tomorrow, and soon, where he has betaken him to the Greek Theatre at Berkeley, California, it will be strange if we are not to hear of happy collaborations there with the scenic fantasy of Sam Hume.

William Vaughn Moody, the beauty of whose masques, unstaged in his lifetime, still awaits the sympathetic producer; Robinson, whose prose plays of caustic soul-portraiture call for the advent of a repertory theatre of ideas; Torrence, who has dramatized the lyric heart of the negro race and—in conjunction with Robert Edmond Jones and Emilie Hapgood, as producers—has already accomplished a native pioneer-

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OUR POETS OF TODAY

CHAPTER I

Amy Lowell

Many attempts have been made to define poetry for the layman. Some have sought to set it down as figures of speech or metric measures; others, a vague groping among soft sounding words for spiritual expressions reserved for a selected few.

In a contest of Miss Wilkinson's Poetry Club (New York) a prize was awarded for the best definition of poetry to Annie L. Laney, who describes it:

> The magic light that springs
> From the deep soul of things
> When, called by their true names,
> Their essence is set free;
> The word, illuminate,
> Showing the soul's estate,
> Baring the hearts of men;
> Poetry!

Henry T. Schnittkind says:

"Our human minds are like so many imperfect and distorted mirrors in which The One is reflected in a million apparently irreconcilable variations. Now and

then, however, the mist lifts for the fraction of a second before a small part of the mirror of our minds, and a poem is born. Then we realize that the color of the dying leaf is one and the same with the tint of the setting sun, that the rippling laughter of a child is not only akin to, but is the ripple of the fountain. The soft syllable of a mother's lullaby and the notes that fall like blossoms from the flute-player's lips are but different cadences of the self-same voice of God. The reason why an apt figure of speech thrills us so strangely is because the poet, by means of this figure of speech, stretches an invisible thread of gold between our hearts and the heart of God. Every poem that does this, however imperfectly, is to me a true poem and a great poem.

In the author's school days he was taught that poetry was truth, beauty, and music—and facing these various requirements comes Amy Lowell with a brand of poetry that has caused more comment of attack and defense, praising and condemning criticism, than that meted out to any American poet of recent years.

Amy Lowell is regarded as the chief American propagandist of our so called *vers libre*. It was with the publication of her first book, "A Dome of Many Coloured Glass," that there was born the forerunner of our free verse poems, and from it many maddening verse makers were to fashion even madder verses. When this first free verse poem was written "Imagism" was an unheard of word and *vers libre* had yet to become a factor of dispute for the orthodox and the new school of poets.

And one of the most important figures in our poetry

making of today is Miss Lowell, with her two-fold vocation of poet and critic. While she has willingly or otherwise obtained for herself a super-radical sort of reputation, her work fulfills the fundamentals or ideals laid down for poetry in its true sense. She has given New England and the remainder of our country a succession of jolts but "it is (to quote from Miss Lowell herself) an interesting commentary on the easy scorn with which non-New Englanders regard New England that two of the six poets (whom she discusses as the most significant of the day) should be of the very bone and sinew of New England." These two are Frost and Robinson. A third, whom Miss Lowell modestly refrains from mentioning, is herself.

Amy Lowell was born in Brookline, Mass., on February 9, 1874, and was educated in the private schools of her native state.

No biographical presentation of her would be complete without including the statement that her genealogical tree presents the names of James Russell Lowell, the poet, who was a cousin of Miss Lowell's grandfather, Professor Percival Lowell, a writer of note, and President Lawrence Lowell of Harvard University.

Although at the age of thirteen years Miss Lowell displayed some ability at verse making, she spent most of her time in out-of-door sports, caring for the animals upon her father's great flower-covered estates and reading from the large collection of books that filled the family library. Richard Hunt in a biographical résumé of Miss Lowell expresses this childhood influence of gardens and flowers upon her as follows:

"There have been many kinds of nature poets, but none exactly like Miss Lowell. She is the poet of that nature which is the product of landscape gardening and architecture. As we go through her pages we find ourselves in old secluded gardens where fountains play into cool basins, paths wind among statues and flowering shrubbery, and marble steps lead to shady garden seats. Her poems are sweet-scented with narcissus."

Is it not this flower-love which we see in full fruit in that most colorful and remarkable poem called "Patterns"?

I walk down the garden paths,
And all the daffodils
Are blowing, and the bright blue squills.
I walk down the patterned garden paths
In my stiff, brocaded gown.
With my powdered hair and jewelled fan,
I too am a rare
Pattern. As I wander down
The garden paths.

My dress is richly figured,
And the train
Makes a pink and silver stain
On the gravel, and the thrift
Of the borders.
Just a plate of current fashion,
Tripping by in high-heeled, ribboned shoes.
Not a softness anywhere about me,
Only a whale-bone and brocade.
The daffodils and squills
Flutter in the breeze

As they please.
And I weep;
For the lime tree is in blossom
And one small flower has dropped upon my bosom.
. . . . . .
Underneath my stiffened gown
Is the softness of a woman bathing in a marble basin,
A basin in the midst of hedges grown
So thick, she cannot see her lover hiding,
But she guesses he is near,
. . . . . .
I would be the pink and silver as I ran along the paths,
And he would stumble after,
Bewildered by my laughter.
I should see the sun flashing from his sword hilt and the buckles on his shoes.
I would choose
To lead him in a maze along the patterned paths.
A bright and laughing maze for my heavy booted lover,
Till he caught me in the shade,
And the buttons of his waistcoat bruised my body as he clasped me,
Aching, melting, unafraid.

Underneath the fallen blossoms
In my bosom,
Is a letter I have hid.
It was brought to me this morning by a rider from the Duke.
"Madam, we regret to inform you that Lord Hartwell
Died in action Thursday sen'night."

As I read it in the white, morning sunlight,
The letters squirmed like snakes.
"Any answer, Madam?" said my footman.
"No," I told him.

. . . . . .

In Summer and in Winter I shall walk
Up and down
The patterned garden paths
In my stiff, brocaded gown.
The squills and daffodils
Will give place to pillared roses, and to asters,
and to snow.
I shall go
Up and down,
In my gown.
Gorgeously arrayed,
Boned and stayed.
And the softness of my body will be guarded
from embrace
By each button, hook, and lace.
For the man who should loose me is dead,
Fighting with the Duke in Flanders,
In a pattern called a war.
Christ! What are the patterns for?

(The Little Review)

Miss Lowell lived abroad for many years upon the completion of her school life, but it was not until 1902, upon her return to the family homestead in Brookline, that she began seriously to study the technique of poetry. Then followed eight years of preparation, described by Mr. Hunt as "a solitary and faithful apprenticeship, reading the masters, learning the technique of poetry, and developing her genius by

constant exercise. It was a discouraging struggle, for she was her only critic, but to this fact is undoubtedly due much of her individuality and excellence."

Miss Lowell's first published poem appeared in *The Atlantic Monthly,* and in 1912, "A Dome of Many-Coloured Glass" was issued. "Sword Blades and Poppy Seed" followed in the spring of 1913, and here was demonstrated the natural growth of the tendencies shown in the first volume for free verse, together with sonnets, pictorial pieces and lyrics; long narratives, bits of imagery and the earliest specimens of "polyphonic prose."

Critical essays came with the publication of "Six French Poets," an authoritative volume and one of the finest pieces of writing that we have on French poetry.

"Men, Women and Ghosts" followed in 1916, developing more strongly but with the same fineness and sureness of the master poet, polyphonic prose. The fifth book to come from Miss Lowell's pen, "Tendencies in Modern American Poetry," is an expression of her ideas in separating the wheat from the chaff in our modern American poetry. This was published in October, 1917. "Can Grande's Castle," impressively beautiful, was published early in the fall of 1918.

Amy Lowell writes with a vigorous hand, simple in style, but with potent meaning. In the following lines from "A Bather" something may be judged of her ability as a chooser of words, of a talent that has few equals for appeal to the senses in poetry:

Thick dappled by circles of sunshine and fluttering shade,
Your bright, naked body advances, blown over by leaves,

Half-quenched in their various green, just a point of you showing,
A knee or a thigh, sudden glimpsed, then at once blotted into
The filmy and flickering forest, to start out again
Triumphant in smooth, supple roundness, edged sharp as white ivory,
Cool, perfect, with rose rarely tinting your lips and your breasts,
Swelling out from the green in the opulent curves of ripe fruit,
And hidden, like fruit, by the swift intermittence of leaves.
So, clinging to branches and moss, you advance on the ledges
Of rock which hang over the stream, with the wood-smells about you,
The pungence of strawberry plants and of gum-oozing spruces,
While below runs the water impatient, impatient—to take you,
To splash you, to run down your sides, to sing you of deepness,
Of pools brown and golden, with brown-and-gold flags on their borders.
Of blue, lingering skies floating solemnly over your beauty,
Of undulant waters a-sway in the effort to hold you,
To keep you submerged and quiescent while over you glories
The summer.
Oread, Dryad, or Naiad, or just
Woman, clad only in youth and in gallant perfection,
Standing up in a great burst of sunshine, you dazzle my eyes

Like a snow-star, a moon, your effulgence burns up in
a halo,
For you are the chalice which holds all the races of men,
You slip into the pool and the water folds over your
shoulder,
And over the tree-tops the clouds slowly follow your
swimming,
And the scent of the woods is sweet on this hot summer
morning.

(*Harpers Magazine*)

There is a line of years between "Patterns" and "Dreams in War Time" published in *The Little Review,* and in this latter is shown the war's reaction upon Miss Lowell's writing—be they reactions of good or evil growth:

I.

I wandered through a house of many rooms.
It grew darker and darker,
Until, at last, I could only find my way
By passing my fingers along the wall.
Suddenly my hand shot through an open window,
And the thorn of a rose I could not see
Pricked it so sharply
That I cried aloud.

II.

I dug a grave under an oak tree.
With infinite care, I stamped my spade
Into the heavy grass.
The sod sucked it,
And I drew it out with effort,
Watching the steel run liquid in the moonlight
As it came clear.

I stooped, and dug, and never turned,
For behind me,
On the dried leaves,
My own face lay like a white pebble,
Waiting.

But while Miss Lowell has achieved much herself in the war of *vers libre,* there have grown up in her trail in that great wave of pseudo *vers libre,* imitators and misnomered poets, samples of whose work appeared in the same number of *The Little Review* as Miss Lowell's own "Dreams in War Times."

DEPRESSION BEFORE SPRING

The cock crows
But no queen rises.

The hair of my blonde
Is dazzling,
As the spittle of cows,
Threading the wind.

Ho! Ho!

But ki-ki-ri-ki
Brings no rou-cou,
No rou-cou-cou.

But no queen comes
In slipper green.

SHE GOES TO PISA

She has rounded her shoulders
To the curve of his arm
And walked with him slowly.

She has walked with him
Slowly;
Granite procession,
White gesture of stars.

It is for these things that writers of free verse must blush!

In England Miss Lowell also had gained a large audience and a 48-page pamphlet by Miss Winifred Bryher, published in London, pays tribute to her as "an explorer . . . offering of her own vision to unobservant eyes the breaking of innumerable barriers."

This English critic in commenting upon Miss Lowell's artistic progress says: "Development is ever of essential interest to me, but it is seldom growth in a writer's mind, outlook, can be traced in such detail and astounding measure, as in Miss Lowell's books. . . . But though the fibres are visible from which imagism is to blossom, definite touch of it is absent, or hovers a line or two, fearful of alighting. This was in 1912. In 1914 the first 'Antholgie des Imagistes' was printed, in which Miss Lowell is poorly represented by a single cadence, as idiomatic of her speech as anything she has written, and the earliest poem (according to accessible dates) of that region, so instinct with dreamed reality it is more vivid than an actual world, Miss Lowell's own province, in which we are admitted to the daily company of loveliness, through the magic of her phrase. With 'Sword Blades and Poppy Seed,' published two months later, we are in the full maturity of imagist expression."

CHAPTER II

Sara Teasdale

For the first time in its history, Columbia University, in the spring of 1918, awarded a prize of $500 for a book of poetry, to Sara Teasdale, for her volume of "Love Songs" published in the fall of 1917—poems of true lyric quality that have won for their creator such a high place among American poets.

Although one of the younger American writers, and almost the direct antithesis in poetry style to Amy Lowell, Sara Teasdale is a favorite throughout the United States, and a number of her poems have been translated into French, Spanish, Danish, and other languages.

The beauty that charms at the very start the lover of exquisite verse is found in the opening stanzas of "Barter" which begins Miss Teasdale's "Love Songs":

Life has loveliness to sell
  All beautiful and splendid things,
Blue waves whitened on a cliff,
  Soaring fire that sways and sings,
And children's faces looking up
Holding wonder like a cup.

Life has loveliness to sell,
  Music like a curve of gold,

Scent of pine trees in the rain,
  Eyes that love you, arms that hold,
And for your spirit's still delight,
Holy thoughts that star the night.

Sara Teasdale was born in St. Louis, August 8, 1884, and was educated in private schools in her home city. In 1903 she was graduated from Hosmer Hall and soon after left her St. Louis home for Southern Europe and Egypt. Greece and Italy furnished inspiration for many of her earlier poems. In 1907 her first book, "Sonnets to Duse," was published. On its appearance a copy fell into the hands of Arthur Symons, the famous English critic and poet, who praised the unconscious technique of her writing. Her first poem to achieve wide recognition was a monologue, done in blank verse, "Guinevere," which appeared in *Reedy's Mirror*. Other monologues in the same style followed, each offering a fresh aspect of some famous woman in history or art, including "Beatrice" and "Helen of Troy." The latter, after being published in *Scribner's Magazine*, became the title of her second volume of poems, published by G. P. Putnam's Sons in 1911.

To Miss Teasdale's second journey abroad we are indebted for such songs as "Off Capri" and "Night Song at Amalfi":

I asked the heaven of stars
  What I should give my love—
It answered me with silence,
  Silence above.

I asked the darkened sea
  Down where the fishers go—
It answered me with silence,
  Silence below.

There is something akin in the work of Sara Teasdale and the "Grenstone Poems" of Witter Bynner, and it is of interest to read Mr. Bynner's own picture of his contemporary whom he makes the subject of a poem:

O there were lights and laughter
  And the motions to and fro
Of people as they enter
  And people as they go. . . .

O there were many voices
  Vying at the feast,
But mostly I remember
  Yours—who spoke the least.

Sara Teasdale's belief in our own American poetry is well founded.

"A fairly wide acquaintance with the contemporary poetry of England," she says, "makes me sure that we are nearer than they are to producing great work. Aside from Masefield, we have men with stronger vision and more original method than they.

"As to my own work, I feel that the best of it is done in brief, exceedingly simple poems. I try to say what moves me—I never care to surprise my reader; and I avoid, not from malice aforethought, but simply because I dislike them, all words that are not met with in common speech, and all inversions of word or

phrases. My poems aren't written, in the literal sense of that word. They sometimes never meet pen and paper until they have been complete for days in my mind. Perhaps this habit of composition is partly responsible for the fact that I never use intricate stanzas—it would be too hard to compose them in my usual way. For me one of the greatest joys of poetry is to know it by heart—perhaps that is why the simple song-like poems appeal to me most—they are the easiest to learn. And so I should place Christina Rossetti above her brother, as a poet, and perhaps also above the more opulent Mrs. Browning."

Sara Teasdale is a resident of New York City. She was married in December, 1914, in St. Louis to Mr. E. B. Filsinger, an authority on international trade, on which subject he has written a number of books.

Aside from the love lyrics contained in Miss Teasdale's prize winning volume, it also includes a group of poems, "Songs Out of Sorrow," which were voted the best of those read at meetings of the Poetry Society of America during the year 1916-17. As a proof of a poet's ability to write a popular selling book witness "Love Songs." This was a volume that met with instant popularity as well as artistic success. It was printed in several editions, the second edition becoming necessary before the book was three weeks off the press.

"Rivers to the Sea," "Helen of Troy" and "Love Songs" come nearest to meeting our best standards for perfect poetry. Here are the cadences of pure lyric and the simple language that this poet chooses so ably to express herself.

Here is a poet who expresses the extremes of human emotion in poems that are simple and short. Many of them have only eight lines, but the quality of personality is strong and rich in music with a combination of tenderness and spontaneity.

William Marion Reedy finds "Rivers to the Sea" the best book of pure lyrics that has appeared in English since A. E. Housman's "A Shropshire Lad."

The Boston Transcript declares that Sara Teasdale sings about love better than any other contemporary American poet, and William Stanley Braithwaite in the *Year Book of American Poetry* for 1915 avows that there is in Miss Teasdale's art the purest song quality in American poetry.

In "Love Songs," says *The New York Times*, "Sara Teasdale's best and most characteristic work is presented. Her lyrics will far outlast this period and become part of that legacy of pure song which one age leaves to another."

Perhaps no living American poet has had so many poems set to music as has Sara Teasdale, whose singing words and singing lines abound in these excerpts from her "Love Songs":

THE LOOK

Strephon kissed me in the spring,
  Robin in the fall,
But Colin only looked at me,
  And never kissed at all.

Strephon's kiss was lost in jest,
  Robin's lost in play,

But the kiss in Colin's eyes
Haunts me night and day.

SPRING NIGHT

The park is filled with night and fog,
The veils are drawn about the world,
The drowsy lights along the paths
Are dim and pearled.

I AM NOT YOURS

I am not yours, not lost in you
Not lost, although I long to be
Lost as a candle lit at noon,
Lost as a snowflake in the sea.

MOODS

I am the still rain falling,
Too tired for singing mirth——
Oh, be the green fields calling,
Oh, be for me the earth!

THE ROSE AND THE BEE

If I were a bee and you were a rose,
Would you let me in when the gray wind blows?
Would you hold your petals wide apart,
Would you let me in to find your heart,
If you were a rose? . . .

As for the war songs which our American poets have made from World War inspirations, Sara Teasdale's "Sons" is of stirring beauty:

Men in brown with marching feet,
Like a great machine moved down the street,

And the shrieking of a fife
Led that river of young life,
Soldiers bearing kits and guns,
Mothers' sons—mothers' sons.

Out of the crowd a woman pressed
Forward a little from the rest.
"That's him," she said, "the third one there,
The third one, with the light brown hair!"
She caught my arm and then she swayed
And whispered—I suppose she prayed.
And still they pass with kits and guns,
Mothers' sons.

CHAPTER III

Witter Bynner

When *The New World* was published some years ago, people who followed the poetry mart found in its author, Witter Bynner, a new voice of remarkable strength and astonishing clearness in contemporary American poetry. And this poem of progressive thought was but the forerunner of meritorious things to come.

There has been nothing static about Witter Bynner's work. His poetry has grown with the years and is not yet in fullest fruit.

Witter Bynner stands to the fore of our American contemporary poets by reason of the work he has done, the good things he will accomplish, and the impetus he has given to American poetry with his lectures throughout the country and his encouragement to fledgling poets.

Witter Bynner was born in Brooklyn, New York, in 1881. He received his early education in Massachusetts at the schools in Brookline. He was editor of the school paper, *The Sagamore,* and in 1902 took his degree at Harvard, where he had been one of the editors of *The Advocate.*

The editor's desk of *McClure's Magazine* next claimed his attention, where he stayed until 1906, when

he became literary advisor to Small, Maynard & Company, retiring to the artists' colony at Cornish, N. H., to engage in the business of poetry writing.

¶ In 1907 "An Ode to Harvard and Other Poems" was published, followed by "Kit," a one-act play, two years afterward.

¶ "An Immigrant," the Harvard Phi Beta Kappa poem of 1911, was his work—a piece of writing which startled his academic audience by his ardent plea for equal suffrage. This was the beginning of his public stand for suffrage, for which he has spoken and campaigned ever since.

¶ With "Tiger," Witter Bynner was classed as a radical, something of an outlaw, in fact, until Amy Lowell's polyphonic prose descended in our midst, and form rather than theme became the object of poetical dispute. "Tiger" was acted in Philadelphia, but barred in other cities, and is one of the most striking one-act plays to be written by an American playwright. It has been translated into French, and was much commented upon in London, where the *London Bookman* said of it: "We doubt if so much of actual life and of appalling significance were ever packed into such small compass before."

¶ While it will thus be seen that the writings of Witter Bynner have often found voice in play form, it is to his long and unusual love poem, "The New World," upon which he spent six years, and his "Grenstone Poems" that we must look for the genius of a poet who so strongly lives up to the best traditions handed down by Whitman.

It is latterly by virtue of his "Grenstone Poems"

that Witter Bynner has marked himself upon the best that so far we may hand down to the next generation. Here is a lyrical quality that is superb, democracy's spirit and love of free things that embodies our highest ideals and establishes new values of their own. And here is a poet who can write with equal beauty in the customary and accepted forms, and who also is able to break into new ways and new forms in a fashion that the following selections from "Grenstone Poems" show:

POPLARS

Poplars against a mountain
  Seem frequently to me
To be little-windowed cities
  And sun-waves on the sea.

Perhaps dead men remember
  Those beckonings of fire,
Waves that have often crumbled
  And windows of desire. . . .

Another year and some one,
  Standing where I now stand,
Shall watch my tree rekindle,
  From ancient sea and land—

The beckoning of an ocean,
  The beckoning of a town,
Till the sun's behind the mountain
  And the wind dies down.

THE CIRCUS

. . . . Whose vast and rusted deeps were unmoving but for the slow, blue, diagonal line of twilight, as clear

as the blue, diagonal shirt across the flesh of the fellow in the hanging rings. . . .
And from the edge of the canyon a blue-jay darted and poised and chirped, as undaunted as the Mexican boy darting and uttering his small, hoarse phrases over the edge of death. . . .
That rim
Where the sky at night is tipped upside down and silence is brought to your feet,
The silence containing China and Syria and Egypt and all their architecture and swift motions and their pyramids and unremembered speech—
And a river that pours unheard.

"Grenstone Poems" was judged by the Columbia University Committee one of the two best books of poetry published during 1917. A significant poem of the collection is the one from which the volume takes its name, "Grenstone":

"Is there such a place as Grenstone?"
Celia, hear them ask!—
Tell me, shall we share it with them?
Shall we let them breathe and bask

On the windy, sunny pasture,
Where the hill-top turns its face
Toward the valley of the mountain,
Our belovèd place?

Shall we show them through our churchyard,
With its crumbling wall
Set between the dead and living?
Shall our willowed waterfall,

Huckleberries, pines and bluebirds,
  Be a secret we shall share? . . .
If they make but little of it,
  Celia, shall we care?

"Grenstone Poems" form by their sequence a more or less definite narrative. A young poet, dejected, goes to the country town of Grenstone, where after a time he meets Celia—through whom not only life becomes rich for him, but death also. Taken as a whole, the book is a lyric transcript of the finding and unfolding of that happiness to which the poet has given a different kind of expression in the philosophic narrative of "The New World."

Bynner's "Lincoln" burns high with the spirit of democracy and it is of interest to study this in comparison with his ~~more recent~~ tribute to young France, which found its inspiration in Pierre de Lanux's book, "Young France and America."

REPUBLIC TO REPUBLIC

1776-1917

France!
It is I answering.
America!
And it shall be remembered not only in our lips but
  in our hearts
And shall awaken forever familiar and new as the
  morning
That we were the first of all lands
To be lovers,
To run to each other with the incredible cry
Of recognition.

Bound by no ties of nearness or of knowledge
But of the nearness of the heart,
You chose me then—
And so I choose you now
By the same nearness—
And the name you called me then
I call you now—
O Liberty, my Love!

A FARMER REMEMBERS LINCOLN

"Lincoln?—
Well, I was in the old Second Maine,
The first regiment in Washington from the Pine Tree State.
Of course I didn't get the butt of the clip;
We was there for guardin' Washington—
We was all green."

. . . . .

"Yes, sir. His looks was kind o' hard to forget.
He was a spare man,
An old farmer.
Everything was all right, you know,
But he wa'n't a smooth-appearin' man at all—
Not in no ways;
Thin-faced, long-necked,
And a swellin' kind of a thick lip like.

"And he was a jolly old fellow—always cheerful;
He wa'n't so high but the boys could talk to him their own ways.
While I was servin' at the Hospital
He's come in and say, 'You look nice in here'—
Praise us up, you know.
And he'd bend over and talk to the boys—

And he'd talk so good to 'em—so close—
That's why I call him a farmer.
I don't mean that everything about him wa'n't all
right, you understand,
It's just—well, I was a farmer—
And he was my neighbor, anybody's neighbor.

"I guess even you young folks would 'a' liked him."

Witter Bynner is a firm believer in the work of American poets and gives high place to the writings of Vachel Lindsay, Edgar Lee Masters and Edwin Arlington Robinson.

With the explosion of spectricism Bynner was discovered in the capacity of a *vers libre* baiter which found its inspiration, according to Mr. Bynner, as follows:

"Imagists and Vorticists long had aroused my ire, and one day in Chicago I determined to form an ultra-modern school of poetry myself just to show how easily it might be done. I was attending a performance of the Russian Ballet in Chicago at the moment when the idea struck me. What should I call my new school? I looked down at my program and found it opened at 'Le Spectre de la Rose.' The word spectre struck me. Spectrists—that was a good, suggestive name. I adopted it forthwith."

In the preface of "Spectra," a collection of the verse by Emanuel Morgan (Witter Bynner) and Anne Knish (Arthur Davison Ficke), the following definition is given:

"An explanation of the term 'Spectric' will indicate something of the nature of the technique which it de-

scribes. 'Spectric' has, in this connection, three separate but closely related meanings. In the first place, it speaks, to the mind; of that process of diffraction by which are disarticulated the several colored and other rays of which light is composed. It indicates our feeling that the theme of a poem is to be regarded as a prism, upon which the colorless white light of infinite existence falls and is broken up into glowing, beautiful, and intelligible hues. In its second sense, the term Spectric relates to the reflex vibrations of physical light, and, by analogy, the after-colors of the poet's initial vision. In its third sense, Spectric connotes the overtones, adumbrations, or spectres which for the poet haunt all objects both of the seen and unseen world, those shadowy projections, sometimes grotesque, which, hovering around the real, give to the real its full ideal significance and its poetic worth. These spectres are the manifold spell and true essence of objects,—like the magic that would inevitably encircle a mirror from the hand of Helen of Troy."

But if Bynner's little fling into the "Spectric" is responsible for the style of "The Beloved Stranger," that new and diverse style of poetical expression in which Mr. Bynner's latest book appears, it has served a worthy purpose.

The following poems are from it:

AUTUMN

Last year, and other years,
When autumn was a vision of old friendships,
Of friends gone many ways
Yet never gone,

I stood alone upon this bank of coppered fern,
I breathed my height of isolation,
Encircled by a remembering countryside.
I touched dead fingers in a larch;
I sailed on long blue waves of land
Transfixed the whole horizon round;
I wore the old imperial shades
Of aster, sumac, goldenrod;
I flaunted my banners of maple;
And, when the sun went down,
I lay full length
Upon a scarlet death-bed.

So happy a thing was autumn,
Other years
But here you stand beside me on this hill,
And shake your head and smile your smile
And twist these things lightly between your fingers
As a pinch of dust
And bare your throat
And show me only spring,
Spring, spring,
Fluttering like your slender side,
Cascading like your hair.

COINS

I am a miser of my memories of you
And will not spend them.
When they were anticipations
I spent them.
And bought you with them.
But now I have exchanged you for memories,
And I will only pour them from one hand into the other

And back again,
Listening to their
Clink,
Till some one comes
Worth using them
To buy. . . .
Then I will change them again into anticipations.

Both poets and critics have found in Witter Bynner a rare genius and have written of him as follows:

"Witter Bynner has come into his own . . . a great poet."—*Los Angeles Graphic* (Margaret B. Wilkinson).

"Underlying his honest line there is a firm-founded human note that reaches out through the dress of present-day phrase and fixes upon one's mind with the eternal grip of truth."—*New York Evening Sun.*

"If you haven't seen Bynner's Ode," writes one Harvard man to another, "hasten, hurry, run, waste no time, but get a copy of your own. Here are your memories, your fun, your dreams, your friendships, your professors, your familiar sights and sounds, caught between the covers."

"We do not know of anything in American literature quite like this celebration of a university by one of its sons. . . . It is successful from first to last."—*Boston Transcript.*

"A powerful, eloquent, vehement language—and thought that rushes on impetuously toward the sentient end."—William Butler Yeats.

Mr. Bynner is a resident of New York, in which city the greater part of his work is done. His pub-

lished poems include "Young Harvard and Other Poems," "Tiger," "The Little King," "The New World," "Iphigenia in Tauris," "Grenstone Poems," and "The Beloved Stranger." Mr. Bynner's most recent work, "The Golden Wing," a morality play, will be published following its metropolitan presentation, promised for the near future.

There is Oriental blood flowing in the veins of Witter Bynner, and perhaps it is due to this ancestral heritage that the prophetic utterances found in our greatest poets is so strongly developed in this man. This is evidenced time and again in his writings.

And as for Bynner's religion, there is no small trace of a deference to Buddha in some of his poems, no doubt again an inheritance. For example:

Behold the man alive in me,
  Behold the man in you!
If there is God—am I not he?—
  Shall I myself undo?

I have been waiting long enough . . .
  Impossible gods, good-by;
I wait no more. . . . The way is rough—
  But the god who climbs is I.

CHAPTER IV

ROBERT FROST, EDWIN ARLINGTON ROBINSON

Robert Frost

William Lyon Phelps, writing in *The Bookman,* declares that the difference between Vachel Lindsay and Robert Frost is the difference between a drum-major and a botanist, for the former marches gaily at the head of his big band, looking up and around at the crowd; the latter finds it sweet

> with uplifted eyes
> To pace the ground, if path be there or none.

New England contemporaries of Frost have praised him and found his work good. His books have been both artistic and commercially satisfactory. But to the author of this book, his poems are cold, often gaunt and bare in their stern realism.

England first welcomed Frost. He is the sort of poet that many English critics obviously would declare to be "type pure American." He has chosen the poetic field of an earlier style of popular narrative verse rather than lyric in the majority of his poems, and it is when producing such lines as these from "The Wood-Pile" that he is at his best:

Out walking in the frozen swamp one grey day
I paused and said, "I will turn back from here.
No, I will go on farther—and we shall see."
The hard snow held me, save where now and then
One foot went down. The view was all in lines
Straight up and down of tall slim trees
Too much alike to mark or name a place by
So as to say for certain I was here
Or somewhere else; I was just far from home.
A small bird flew before me. He was careful
To put a tree between us when he lighted,
And say no word to tell me who he was
Who was so foolish as to think what *he* thought.
He thought that I was after him for a feather—
The white one in his tail; like one who takes
Everything said as personal to himself.

. . . . . .
. . . . . Clematis
Had wound strings round and round it like a bundle.
What held it though on one side was a tree
Still growing, and on one a stake and prop,
These latter about to fall. I thought that only
Some one who lived in turning to fresh tasks
Could so forget his handiwork on which
He spent himself, the labour of his axe,
And leave it there far from a useful fireplace
To warm the frozen swamp as best it could
With the slow smokeless burning of decay.

Robert Frost was born in San Francisco, California, March 26, 1875, and for over nine years he lived in a community that was almost at the other extreme, geographically as well as temperamentally, from that part of the country which later was to claim him as its own poet.

As a boy Robert Frost tried his hand at various things. Like Louis Untermeyer and Cale Young Rice, he accepted school as one of the necessary evils of life. He attended Dartmouth and later Harvard, spending but a few months at the former and two years at the latter. Between these educational experiences, he married Eleanor Miriam White in 1895. In 1900 he became a farmer in New Hampshire. In 1911 he taught school and a year later went to England.

It was in London in 1913 that his first book of poems, "A Boy's Will," was published, just nineteen years after his first published poem appeared in *The Independent*. His second volume was also published in London in 1914, "North of Boston." In March, 1915, he returned to America, with England's stamp of approval upon his work. He bought a farm in New Hampshire, and "Mountain Interval" appeared in 1916.

Robert Frost is an outdoor poet who glories in such poem titles as "Birches," "Pea Brush," "Putting in the Seed," "The Cow in Apple Time," "A Late Walk," "Wind and Window Flower," and "Blueberries."

Again to quote Mr. Phelps, who has so well expressed the style of Robert Frost in these lines, "In spite of his preoccupation with the exact value of oral words, he is not a singing lyrist. There is not much *bel canto* in his volumes. Nor do any of his poems seem spontaneous. He is a thoughtful man, given to meditation; the meanest flower or a storm-bedraggled bird will lend him material for poetry. But the expression of his poems does not seem naturally fluid. I suspect he has blotted many a line. He is as delib-

erate as Thomas Hardy, and cultivates the lapidary style. Even in the conversations frequently introduced into his pieces, he is as economical with words as his characters are with cash. This gives to his work a hardness of outline in keeping with the New England temperament and the New Hampshire climate. There is no doubt that much of his peculiarly effective dramatic power is gained by his extremely careful expenditure of language."

There is a noticeable contrast between Mr. Frost's book, "A Boy's Will," introspective poems of youth's impressions, "North of Boston," with its hardy New England pictures, and "Mountain Interval," with its strongly atmospheric poems of New England seasons and life.

Such lines as these are within the poet's love of his New England and its natural beauties that best exemplify his knowledge and ability to interpret them:

BIRCHES

When I see birches bend to left and right
Across the lines of straighter, darker trees,
I like to think some boy's been swinging them.
But swinging doesn't bend them down to stay.
Ice-storms do that. Often you must have seen them
Loaded with ice a sunny winter morning
After a rain. They click upon themselves
As the breeze rises, and turn many-coloured
As the stir cracks and crazes their enamel.
Soon the sun's warmth makes them shed crystal shells
Shattering and avalanching on the snow-crust—
Such heaps of broken glass to sweep away
You'd think the inner dome of heaven had fallen.

Mr. Frost lives the year round on his farm in Franconia, New Hampshire. He is not, however, a gentleman farmer. On his farm, backed up against a forest of fir trees and facing one of the most beautiful mountains in New England, he writes slowly, surrounded by the nature he loves and the companionship of his wife and four children, Lesley, Carol, Irma and Marjorie.

Edwin Arlington Robinson

"We must never forget that all inherited prejudice and training pulls one way, in these unfortunate cases; the probing, active mind pulls another. The result is a profound melancholy, tinged with cynicism. Self-analysis has sapped joy, and the impossibility of constructing an ethical system in accordance both with desire and with tradition has twisted the mental vision out of all true proportion. It takes the lifetime of more than one individual to throw off a superstition, and the effort to do so is not made without sacrifice.

"Unless one understands this fact, one cannot comprehend the difficult and beautiful poetry of Edwin Arlington Robinson."

So writes Amy Lowell in her study of Edwin Arlington Robinson in "Tendencies in Modern American Poetry," a most understanding work by a sincere admirer of his talent.

Edwin Arlington Robinson was born on December 22, 1869, at Head Tide, Maine. He was only two or three years old when his parents moved to the town of Gardiner. He entered the Gardiner High

School and from there went to Harvard College in 1891, from which he did not graduate, due to the ill health of his father, which caused him to discontinue his college studies in 1893. In 1896 came the forerunner of his poetic expressions in a privately printed little book. This was followed by "The Children of the Night" in 1897.

Of "The Children of the Night," Miss Lowell writes: "It must be admitted that this is one of the most completely gloomy books in the whole range of poetry. The note is struck in this quatrain:

"We cannot crown ourselves with everything,
Nor can we coax the Fates with us to quarrel:
No matter what we are, or what we sing,
Time finds a withered leaf in every laurel."

Following the publication of this book, Mr. Robinson passed through the lean years of a poet born too soon, and five years went by before his next volume, "Captain Craig," was issued. This bore witness of a psychological growth of most serious import.

It was during this period of Mr. Robinson's career that Colonel Theodore Roosevelt, at that time President of the United States, became interested in his work and offered him a position in the New York Custom House, which position he held for five years, leaving it in 1910 upon the publication of his third book, "The Town Down the River." There are three significant studies of famous men in this book—Lincoln, Roosevelt, and Napoleon. The poem on Lincoln he calls "The Master":

A flying word from here and there
Had sown the name at which we sneered,
But soon the name was everywhere,
To be reviled and then revered:
A presence to be loved and feared,
We cannot hide it, or deny
That we, the gentlemen who jeered,
May be forgotten by and by.

He came when days were perilous
And hearts of men were sore beguiled;
And having made his note of us,
He pondered and was reconciled.
Was ever master yet so mild
As he, and so untamable?
We doubted, even when he smiled,
Not knowing what he knew so well.

He knew that undeceiving fate
Would shame us whom he served unsought;
He knew that he must wince and wait—
The jest of those for whom he fought;
He knew devoutly what he thought
Of us and of our ridicule;
He knew that we must all be taught
Like little children in a school.

We gave a glamour to the task
That he encountered and saw through,
But little of us did he ask,
And little did we ever do.
And what appears if we review
The season when we railed and chaffed?
It is the face of one who knew
That we were learning while we laughed.

The face that in our vision feels
Again the venom that we flung,
Transfigured to the world reveals
The vigilance to which we clung.
Shrewd, hallowed, harassed, and among
The mysteries that are untold,
The face we see was never young
Nor could it ever have been old.

For he, to whom we had applied
Our shopman's test of age and worth,
Was elemental when he died,
As he was ancient at his birth:
The saddest among kings of earth,
Bowed with a galling crown, this man
Met rancor with a cryptic mirth,
Laconic—and Olympian.

The love, the grandeur, and the fame
Are bounded by the world alone;
The calm, the smouldering, and the flame
Of awful patience were his own:
With him they are forever flown
Past all our fond self-shadowings,
Wherewith we cumber the Unknown
As with inept, Icarian wings.

For we were not as other men:
'Twas ours to soar and his to see.
But we are coming down again,
And we shall come down pleasantly;
Nor shall we longer disagree
On what it is to be sublime,
But flourish in our perigee
And have one Titan at a time.

It was with the publication of "The Man Against the Sky" that Edwin Arlington Robinson, six years later, achieved one of the finest things he has yet done. This was in 1916. Here, with all the genius that is his own, he has crammed into a minimum space some colossal verse.

Robinson refused to be prolific, for in the twenty years between the publication of "The Children of the Night" and this book he had produced in toto four volumes of verse and two plays.

The poem from which "The Man Against the Sky" takes its name begins:

> Between me and the sunset, like a dome
> Against the glory of a world on fire,
> Now burned a sudden hill,
> Bleak, and, and high, by flame-lit height made higher,
> With nothing on it for the flame to kill
> Save one who moved and was alone up there
> To loom before the chaos and the glare
> As if he were the last god going home
> Unto his last desire.

Certain critics have found "Ben Jonson Entertains a Man from Stratford" to be one of the most original in this book. "Flammonde" also is one of the noteworthy poems in this collection:

> The man Flammonde, from God knows where,
> With firm address and foreign air,
> With news of nations in his talk
> And something royal in his walk,

With glint of iron in his eyes,
But never doubt, nor yet surprise,
Appeared, and stayed, and held his head
As one by kings accredited.

Erect, with his alert repose
About him, and about his clothes,
He pictured all tradition hears
Of what we owe to fifty years.
His cleansing heritage of taste
Paraded neither want nor waste;
And what he needed for his fee
To live, he borrowed graciously.

. . . . . .

There was a woman in our town
On whom the fashion was to frown;
But while our talk renewed the tinge
Of a long-faded scarlet fringe,
The man Flammonde saw none of that,
And what he saw we wondered at—
That none of us, in her distress,
Could hide or find our littleness.

We cannot know how much we learn
From those who never will return,
Until a flash of unforeseen
Remembrance falls on what has been.
We've each a darkening hill to climb;
And this is why, from time to time
In Tilbury Town, we look beyond.
Horizons for the man Flammonde.

"Merlin" was published in March, 1917. It is Robinson's own version of the time-worn legend and is not nearly so good an example of his work as is found

in the earlier volumes. It is oftentimes tedious and long drawn out.

Of passing note is the fact that the two "professionally" sworn enemies of each other, Amy Lowell and Witter Bynner, have found his writing good and marked with the genius of true poetry.

CHAPTER V

Percy MacKaye

Poet, dramatist, and pageant-maker is Percy MacKaye, whose work is well worthy of the place it holds in our contemporary American poetry. Here is a man whose work as a dramatist has not imperiled such tuneful lyrics as

Frail Sleep, that blowest by fresh banks
Of quiet, crystal pools, beside whose brink
The varicolored dreams, like cattle, come to drink,

Cool Sleep, thy reeds, in solemn ranks,
That murmur peace to me by midnight's streams,
At dawn I pluck, and dayward pipe my flock of dreams.

And MacKaye turns with equal ability to the "Pageant and Masque of Saint Louis," presented in Forest Park of that city on five successive days, at each performance of which 150,000 people attended.

The paternal grandfather of Mr. MacKaye came to this country from Scotland about 1800, and his grandfather, Colonel James Morrison MacKaye, a staunch adherent of anti-slavery doctrines, was an intimate friend of Clay, Webster, Garrison, and Lincoln. James Steele MacKaye, his father, was dramatist, theatre director and inventor, writing many successful

plays of his day, conspicuous among which were "Hazel Kirke" and "Paul Kauvar." On his mother's side, Percy MacKaye is of New England Puritan descent. His maternal grandmother was president of one of the earliest women's colleges, and his mother is the author of a published dramatization of Jane Austen's "Pride and Prejudice," acted at many schools and colleges.

From this ancestry came the man who has given us such multi-themed poetry but in whose work no better proof of the poetic genius is found than in these moving lines.

THE CHILD-DANCERS[1]

A bomb has fallen over Notre Dame:
Germans have burned another Belgian town:
Russians quelled in the east: England in qualm:

I closed my eyes, and laid the paper down.

Gray ledge and moor-grass and pale bloom of light
By pale blue seas!
What laughter of a child world-sprite,
Sweet as the horns of lone October bees,
Shrills the faint shore with mellow, old delight?
What elves are these
In smocks gray-blue as sea and ledge,
Dancing upon the silvered edge
Of darkness—each ecstatic one
Making a happy orison,
With shining limbs, to the low-sunken sun?—

[1] *The Child-Dancers:* The little children of the Isadora Duncan School of Dancing, to whom these verses refer, came to America in September, 1914, owing to conditions of war in France. Russian, German, French, and English, they form a happy and harmonious family of the belligerent races.

See: now they cease
Like nesting birds from flight:
Demure and debonair
They troop beside their hostess' chair
To make their bedtime courtesies:
"Spokoinoi notchi!—Gute Nachte!
Bon soir! Bon soir!—Good night!"
What far-gleamed lives are these
Linked in one holy family of art?—
Dreams: dreams once Christ and Plato dreamed:
How fair their happy shades depart!

Dear God! how simple it all seemed,
Till once again
Before my eyes the red type quivered: *Slain:*
Ten thousand of the enemy.—
Then laughter! laughter from the ancient sea
Sang in the gloaming: *Athens! Galilee!*
And elfin voices called from the extinuished light:—
"Spokoinoi notchi!—Gute Nachte!
Bon soir! Bon soir!—Good night!"

Percy MacKaye was born in New York City, March 16, 1875, and in this city he gained from the constant companionship of his father much knowledge of the theatre.

In 1892-93 he began his first efforts in poetical lines by writing a series of choral songs for his father's huge musical drama, "Columbus."

The poet was graduated from Harvard College in 1897 and a year afterwards was married to Miss Marion Homer Morse, of Cambridge, Mass., and went abroad to live. In Frascati, near Rome, he wrote "A Garland to Sylvia," and in 1905 came "Fenris the

Wolf," another play. Returning to New York in 1900, Mr. MacKaye taught in a private school for boys for three years, and during this time E. H. Sothern became interested in his dramatic work and commissioned him to write "The Canterbury Pilgrims," first published in 1903. A year later Mr. MacKaye joined the colony of writers and artists at Cornish, New Hampshire, where he makes his permanent home. Perhaps it was here that came the pastoral inspiration for "The Three Dance Motives" which concluded with "The Chase":

Through what vast wood,
By what wild paths of beautiful surprise,
Hast thou returned to us,
Diana, Diana of Desire?
Coming to thy call
What huntresses are these?
What hallowed chase? What long, long cherished goal?

Through man's wan mind
By radiant paths of rhythmic liberty
I am returned to you,
Diviner, diviner of dreams!
Those huntresses, they are my hallowed desires—
My unquenched selves with overflowing quivers.
Joy is our chase and goal:
Our bodies the tense crossbows, and our wild souls the shafts!

At some stage in the life of nearly every poet he seeks to express his own theories on poetry, usually in

verse form. Mr. MacKaye's "Rain Revery" bears testimony to this:

In the lone of night by the pattering tree
I sat alone with Poetry—
With Poetry, my old shy friend,
And his tenuous shadow seemed to blend—
Beyond the lampshine on the sill—
With the mammoth shadow of the hill,
And his breath fell soft in the pool-dark pane
With the murmurous, murmuring muffled hoof
Of the rain, the rain,
The rain on the roof.

"Ah, what of the rapture and melody
We might have wrought, dear Poetry!
Imagined tower and dream-built shrine,
Must they crumble in dark like this pale lampshine?
Our dawn-flecked meadows lyric-shrill,
Shall they lie as dumb as the gloom-drenched hill?
Our song-voiced lovers!—Shall none remain?"—
Under the galloping, gusty hoof
Answered the rain, rain,
Rain on the roof.

The first of Mr. MacKaye's plays to be produced professionally was "Jeanne d'Arc," produced by E. H. Sothern and Miss Julia Marlowe, in 1906.

Since that time ten other plays of his have been acted by such actors as Mr. Harrison Grey Fiske, Madame Bertha Kalich, Mr. Henry Miller, Mr. Frank Reicher, Henrietta Crosman and Henry E. Dixey. His play, "The Scarecrow," was acted during two seasons in England and America.

In civic pageantry Mr. MacKaye is a pioneer in America, his "Gloucester Pageant" produced for President Taft in August (1906), being the first large-scale pageant produced in this country. Since then his "Sanctuary," a Bird Masque in which Miss Eleanor Wilson acted the chief part, and his "Saint Louis," a Civic Masque in which 7,000 citizens of Saint Louis acted, in four performances, before half a million spectators, have attracted national attention.

It is by virtue of Mr. MacKaye's "Lincoln Centenary Ode," one of his longer poems, that he is accredited with having produced one of the most splendid tributes in our American literature to this great American. It concludes:

Leave, then, that wonted grief
Which honorably mourns its martyred dead,
And newly hail instead
The birth of him, our hardy shepherd chief,
Who by green paths of old democracy
Leads still his tribes to uplands of glad peace.

As long as—out of blood and passion blind—
Springs the pure justice of the reasoning mind,
And justice, bending, scorns not to obey
Pity, that once in a poor manger lay,
As long as, thrall'd by time's imperious will,
Brother hath bitter need of brother, still
His presence shall not cease
To lift the ages toward his human excellence,
And races yet to be
Shall in a rude hut do him reverence
And solemnize a simple man's nativity.

Mr. MacKaye in the preface to his "Collected Poems and Plays" says:

"In accepting the invitation of the publishers to collect a portion of my published work within the compass of two volumes, poems and plays, the occasion seems fitting for me to comment on some phases of it as related to the reading public.

"While the writer was still in his teens, he said to himself: 'There is my life-work; it rises over there beyond: I can see its large outlines. I will give myself till I am forty to do its 'prentice work: then perhaps I may be ready to tackle the real job—that vision which lies there alluring, waiting to be realized.'

"Now, then, here is forty; and here is some of the 'prentice work gathered together; yet, as far as concerns myself, apprenticeship has hardly begun: the real life-work still beckons, unrealized, away there beyond. For this reason, in submitting to the reader's interest the works here collected, I should like to introduce them anew rather as the by-gleanings of a journey but just set forth upon, than in any sense the product of a goal attained."

Mr. MacKaye's published works include the following: "The Canterbury Pilgrims," a comedy; "Jeanne d'Arc," a tragedy; "Sappho and Phaon," a tragedy; "Fenris the Wolf," a tragedy; "A Garland of Sylvia," a dramatic revery; "The Scarecrow," a tragedy of the ludicrous; "Mater," an American study in comedy; "The Sistine Eve and Other Poems"; "The Present Hour," a book of poems; "Lincoln," a centenary ode; "The Playhouse and the Play," essays and addresses; "The Civic Theatre," essays and addresses; "Uriel and

Other Poems"; "Anti-Matrimony," a satirical comedy; "To-Morrow," a play in three acts; "Sanctuary," a bird masque; "Saint Louis," a civic masque; "A Thousand Years Ago," a romance of the Orient, and "The Evergreen Tree."

In June, 1914, President Nichols, of Dartmouth, conferred upon Mr. MacKaye the honorary degree of M.A., with these words: "Master of Arts to Percy MacKaye, poet, dramatist, critic, whose large vision of the theatre includes the pageantry and idealism of all men."

Perhaps one of the most significant works of Mr. MacKaye will prove to be the play, based on the life of our first President, "Washington, The Man Who Made Us." Here is exemplified the most significant achievement of Mr. MacKaye—the full and complete merging of poet and playwright, a merging against which there has too long been unnecessary distinction.

CHAPTER VI

Edgar Lee Masters

"Spoon River Anthology" is a book possessing the dual virtues of artistry and popular appeal. It brought forward the name of Edgar Lee Masters as a poet of note and bore witness to the able judgment of that discerning critic—William Marion Reedy, who first published "Spoon River" in *Reedy's Mirror.* It has been whispered among those who claim to know that Masters wrote his Spoon River poems as a joke, a satire on the people of a small town of his youth, at the suggestion of Reedy. But the critics found it good and straightway declared Masters a new light in our American poetry.

"Edgar Lee Masters," says Jessie B. Rittenhouse in *The Bookman,* "is, in short, the most penetrating and merciless psychologist of the present day and surely the bravest. He withholds nothing. Witness such a poem as "Samuel Butler et Al," where one indicts his mother for a life of recreance to the finer duties of motherhood, while he pictures with pitiless exactness the whole panorama of her life. This might be inexcusable, were it not true. We have all seen this woman and observed every detail that Mr. Masters depicts. Indeed, this book is full of first-hand studies, of minute observation. These souls under a micro-

scope, however they might wish to escape, can withhold nothing. One marvels continually at the relentless analysis which probes deeper and deeper, seeking for the hidden springs of action. Only the trained mind, the legal mind, could pursue such clues and arrive at such unappealable decisions. Heredity has an irresistible fascination for Mr. Masters, and it appears and reappears in his latest work. In "Excluded Middle" its effect upon a whole family is shown, in the light of that ever-baffling preoccupation of Mr. Masters —cross-currents of sex, and parental inharmony. Indeed, if we have both a penetrating and a luminous thinker in modern American poetry, it is Edgar Lee Masters, and one says this with full recognition of the fact that it is not always pleasant to follow him in his penetrations."

"Spoon River Anthology" is a sequence of narrative poems dealing with the supposedly after-death "soul barings" of various "dear departeds" in the village of Spoon River. Here the good and the bad—regardless of earthly pose—are held up before the mirror of Truth with all their virtues and vices exposed in her fair white light. Here "Cassius Hueffer" says of himself:

> They have chiseled on my stone the words:
> "His life was gentle, and the elements so
> mixed in him
> That nature might stand up and say to all
> the world,
> This was a man."
> Those who knew me smile
> As they read this empty rhetoric.

My epitaph should have been:
"Life was not gentle to him,
And the elements so mixed in him
That he made warfare on life,
In the which he was slain."
While I lived I could not cope with the slanderous tongues,
Now that I am dead I must submit to an epitaph
Graven by a fool!

Masters' tragic poem of slander and gossip is the story of "Mrs. Williams":

I was the milliner
Talked about, lied about,
Mother of Dora,
Whose strange disappearance
Was charged to her rearing.
My eye quick to beauty
Saw much beside ribbons
And buckles and feathers
And leghorns and felts,
To set off sweet faces,
And dark hair and gold.
One thing I will tell you
And one I will ask:
The stealers of husbands
Wear powder and trinkets,
And fashionable hats.
Wives, wear them yourselves.
Hats may make divorces—
They also prevent them.
Well now, let me ask you:
If all of the children, born here in Spoon River,

Had been reared by the County, somewhere on a farm;
And the fathers and mothers had been given their freedom
To live and enjoy, change mates if they wished,
Do you think that Spoon River
Had been any the worse?

Grim realism comes in the story of the heretic, "Wendell P. Bloyd":

They first charged me with disorderly conduct,
There being no statute on blasphemy.
Later they locked me up as insane
Where I was beaten to death by a Catholic guard.
My offense was this:
I said God lied to Adam, and destined him
To lead the life of a fool,
Ignorant that there is evil in the world as well as good.
And when Adam outwitted God by eating the apple
And saw through the lie,
God drove him out of Eden to keep him from taking
The fruit of immortal life.
For Christ's sake, you sensible people,
Here's what God Himself says about it in the book of Genesis:
"And the Lord God said, Behold the man
Is become as one of us" (a little envy, you see),
"To know good and evil" (The all-is-good lie exposed):
"And now lest he put forth his hand and take
Also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever:
Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden."

(The reason I believe God crucified His Own Son
To get out of the wretched tangle is, because it
sounds just like Him.)

One of the most admirable pieces of writing in this volume, however, is found in Masters' lines to a sweetheart of Abraham Lincoln whom he calls "Anne Rutledge":

Out of me unworthy and unknown
The vibrations of deathless music;
"With malice toward none, with charity for all."
Out of me the forgiveness of millions toward millions,
And the beneficent face of a nation
Shining with justice and truth.
I am Anne Rutledge who sleep beneath these weeds,
Beloved in life of Abraham Lincoln,
Wedded to him, not through union,
But through separation.
Bloom forever, O Republic,
From the dust of my bosom!

In "Toward the Gulf" Masters demonstrates the precepts of Whitman. It is evidenced in the underlying spirit of these poems rather than in the actual form of expression chosen.

Masters has established his right to our best consideration as a poet of high merit, but there are times when some of his lines run parallel with a rather ordinary and not particularly interesting prose form of verse. Certainly there is little poetry in lines like these:

"Miranda married a rich man
And spent his money so fast that he failed.

She lashed him with a scorpion tongue
And made him believe at last
With her incessant reasonings
That he was a fool and so had failed.
In middle life he started over again,
And became tangled in a law suit;
Because of these things he killed himself."

But in "The Awakening" there are the best of Masters' lines, lines that throb and pulsate with the music of real song:

When you lie sleeping; golden hair
Tossed on your pillow; sea shell pink
Ears that nestle, I forbear
A moment while I look and think
How you are mine and if I dare
To bend and kiss you lying there.
. . . . .
A Raphael in the flesh! Resist
I cannot, though to break your sleep
Is thoughtless of me—you are kissed
And roused from slumber dreamless, deep—
You rub away the slumber's mist,
You scold and almost weep.
. . . . .
It is too bad to wake you so,
Just for a kiss. But when awake
You sing and dance, nor seem to know
You slept a sleep too deep to break
From which I roused you long ago
For nothing but my passion's sake—
What though your heart should ache!

It was while engaged in the practice of law that Edgar Lee Masters first began to write verse. He had,

however, been writing for many years poetry of no especial significance until his Spoon River poems.

Masters was born in Garnett, Kansas, on August 23, 1868, the son of Hardin Wallace. He received his education in a high school and Knox College, Illinois, after which he studied law in his father's office. He was admitted in 1891 to the Bar, and is at present a member of the Chicago and Illinois State Bar Associations. He was married to Miss Helen M. Jenkins of Chicago in 1898.

His works include "A Book of Verses," "Maximilian," "The New Star Chamber and Other Essays," "Blood of the Prophets," "Althea," and "The Trifler," "Spoon River Anthology," "Toward the Gulf," and "Songs and Satires." He has contributed articles and essays on political and constitutional subjects to various periodicals and magazines.

CHAPTER VII

Vachel Lindsay

The nearest approach that we in America have to the minstrel of historic times is Vachel Lindsay.

This poet and troubadour has tramped from his home in Springfield, Illinois, over the prairies and through Kansas wheat fields, over the mountains of Colorado and those vast plains and into cities of towered brick and stone that make up our country, singing his own songs, and "preaching the gospel of beauty."

The cloak of the minstrel has fittingly descended upon Lindsay's shoulders, and he has been able to stir his listeners much in that manner as crowds in other days were stirred when they gathered behind the moat-protected castle walls to listen to the minstrel's lay.

Mr. Lindsay is poet through and through. An editorial in *Collier's Weekly* says: "Mr. Lindsay doesn't need to write verse to be a poet. His prose is poetry—poetry straight from the soil of America that is, and of a nobler America that is to be."

There is an interesting comparison in description between Carl Sandburg and Vachel Lindsay's "Pocahontas." Carl Sandburg says: "Pocahontas' body, lovely as a poplar, sweet as a red haw in November or a pawpaw in May—did she wonder? does she re-

member—in the dust—in the cool tombs?"—Vachel Lindsay says:

Her skin was rosy copper-red.
And high she held her beauteous head.
Her step was like a rustling leaf:
Her heart a nest, untouched of grief.
She dreamed of sons like Powhatan,
And through her blood the lightning ran.
Love-cries with the birds she sung,
Birdlike
In the grape-vine swung.
The Forest, arching low and wide
Gloried in its Indian bride.

Rolfe, that dim adventurer,
Had not come a courtier.
John Rolfe is not our ancestor.
We rise from out the soul of her
Held in native wonderland
While the sun's rays kissed her hand,
In the springtime,
In Virginia,
Our mother, Pocahontas.

There are none of our American poets of today whose work epitomizes more strongly Americanism than that of Vachel Lindsay. To witness, "Niagara." Here is a poem which curiously and vitally expresses the beauty and enduring vigor of our national masterpiece:

Within the town of Buffalo
Are prosy men with leaden eyes.

Like ants they worry to and fro
(Important men, in Buffalo).
But only twenty miles away
A deathless glory is at play:
Niagara, Niagara.
. . . . .
Within the town of Buffalo
Are stores with garnets, sapphires, pearls,
Rubies, emeralds aglow,—
Opal chains in Buffalo,
Cherished symbols of success.
They value not your rainbow dress:
Niagara, Niagara.
. . . . .
What marching men of Buffalo
Flood the streets in rash crusade?
Fools-to-free-the-world, they go,
Primeval hearts from Buffalo.
Red cataracts of France to-day
Awake, three thousand miles away
An echo of Niagara,
The cataract Niagara.

Mr. Lindsay believes in the poetry of the spoken word and that its beauty and charm lies in the spoken lines, in beauty of conception. He has carried out his idea in many of those poems where one must hear the spoken word to get the proper effect. This is particularly demonstrated in "Two Old Crows," and in his poem games, "The King of Yellow Butterflies," "The Potatoes' Dance" and "The Booker Washington Trilogy." Those splendid lines about Simon Legree run:

"I like your style, so wicked and free.
Come sit and share my throne with me,

And let us bark and revel."
And there they sit and gnash their teeth,
And each one wears a hop-vine wreath.
They are matching pennies and shooting craps,
They are playing poker and taking naps.
And old Legree is fat and fine:
He eats the fire, he drinks the wine—
Blood and burning turpentine—
Down, down with the Devil;
Down, down with the Devil;
Down, down with the Devil.

In sharp contrast to poems of this nature is "The Chinese Nightingale," which Mr. Lindsay calls "A Song in Chinese Tapestries," the first poem in his recently published book, "The Chinese Nightingale and Other Poems," and which was awarded the Levinson Prize by Harriet Monroe, as the best contribution to "Poetry: A Magazine of Verse," for the year 1915. This is a piece of writing gorgeous as the most brilliant of Chinese tapestries which the poet might have followed:

There were golden lilies by the bay and river,
And silver lilies and tiger-lilies,
And tinkling wind-bells in the gardens of the town
By the black-lacquer gate
Where walked in state
The kind king Chang
And his sweet-heart mate. . . .
With his flag-born dragon
And his crown of pearl . . . and . . . jade,
And his nightingale reigning in the mulberry shade,
And sailors and soldiers on the sea-sands brown,

And priests who bowed them down to your song—
By the city called Han, the peacock town,
By the city called Han, the nightingale town,
The nightingale town.

The poem ends—

Life is a loom, weaving illusion . . .
I remember, I remember
There were ghostly veils and laces . . .
There were ghostly bowery places . . .
With lovers' ardent faces
Bending to one another,
Speaking each his part.
They infinitely echo
In the red cave of my heart.
"Sweetheart, sweetheart, sweetheart,"
They said to one another.
They spoke, I think, of perils past.
They spoke, I think, of peace at last.
One thing I remember:
"Spring came on forever,
Spring came on forever,"
Said the Chinese nightingale.

Another side of Mr. Lindsay's poetry is given by Miss Rittenhouse, writing in *The Bookman*:

"At the Chicago Little Theatre, about a year ago, Vachel Lindsay, always the innovator, staged one of his most picturesque experiments—a dance accompaniment to several of his poems, which he chanted in lieu of music. The dancer was Miss Eleanor Dougherty, who had first improvised an interpretation of Mr. Lindsay's poems when they were both guests at the home of Mrs. William Vaughn Moody.

"The idea of dancing to the rhythms of poetry rather than to music, to give a visual embodiment of the poet's idea while he himself chanted the lines, held such possibilities that much interest was created by the experiment. Mr. Lindsay describes it at some length in his latest volume, 'The Chinese Nightingale,' but modestly speaks of it as an attempt to render 'Poem Games,' whereas it is much more than this, so much more, indeed, that it holds the possibility of becoming a distinct and beautiful art.

"During his recent visit to New York, Mr. Lindsay and Miss Dougherty gave two programmes, one at the Women's University Club and one at the Cosmopolitan Club. Several of the lighter fantasies, such as 'The King of the Yellow Butterflies,' the 'Potato Dance,' and 'Aladdin and the Jinn,' were given with charming effect, while 'King Solomon' offered an opportunity for more dramatic presentation. As rhythmic speech would naturally outrun its accompaniment in the dance or pantomime, Mr. Lindsay uses repetition wherever it is needed, and these repetitions are immensely effective, enforcing the beauty of the lines while giving the dancer leisure for their interpretation. To be sure Vachel Lindsay's work is remarkable for its rhythms, and therefore lends itself particularly well to chanting, but any poetry that possesses beauty of tone and picturesqueness is susceptible of dance interpretation. The field is unlimited and, as Mr. Lindsay suggests, could be admirably applied to classic poetry. Why should we not see the school of Mrs. Florence Fleming Noyes or the Duncan Dancers interpret 'Atalanta in Calydon'? The rhythms of

poetry, as accompaniment, may be made as rich and harmonious as music, and instead of detracting from the beauty of the poet's work, such a representation may enhance it."

William Lyon Phelps finds in the best work of Vachel Lindsay two qualities: "The zest for beauty and the hunger and thirst after righteousness."

"Lindsay made a soap-box tour for the Anti-Saloon League, preaching at the same time the Gospel of Beauty," says Mr. Phelps. "As a rule, reformers are lacking in the two things most sedulously cultivated by commercial travellers and life-insurance agents, tact and humor. If these interesting orders of the Knights of the Road were as lacking in geniality as the typical reformer, they would lose their jobs. And yet fishers of men, for that is what all reformers are, try to fish without bait, at the same time making much loud and offensive noise. Then they are amazed at the callous indifference of humanity to 'great moral issues!'"

Nicholas Vachel Lindsay was the name under which this poet was christened, though "Nicholas" has long been abandoned, and Vachel is pronounced to rhyme with Rachel. He was born in Springfield, Illinois, on November 10, 1879, and for three years was a student at Hiram College in Ohio, followed by a course in art which extended for five years in Chicago and New York.

Between 1905 and 1910 Vachel Lindsay was the creator of strange pictures, a lecturer on various topics, and a writer of unique "bulletins."

In 1910 he took to the highways and by-ways, beginning his long pilgrimages, walking in winter and

spring through the Carolinas, Georgia, Florida and in the North as well.

As a medium of exchange he carried simply his poems, printed on single sheets, which he exchanged for lodging and food. It was in the summer of 1912 that he walked from Illinois into New Mexico.

In a letter to the author of this book, Mr. Lindsay says, "But bear in mind that my tramp-days were mixed with the rest. I walked in the South in the spring of 1906, in the East in the spring of 1908 and the West in the spring of 1912. There is a very definite progress of ideas in the accounts of these three regions. Please remember 'The Handy Guide for Beggars' begins the story. People get so very wide of the mark I am perhaps getting finicky on this matter of chronology."

Vachel Lindsay's "Song of the Congo" is among the best known of his works:

Fat black bucks in a wine barrel room,
Barrel-house kings, with feet unstable,
Sagged and reeled and pounded on the table,
Pounded on the table,
Beat an empty barrel with the handle of a broom,
Hard as they were able,
Boom, boom, boom.
With a silk umbrella and the handle of a broom,
Boomlay, boomlay, boomlay, Boom.
Then I had religion, then I had a vision,
I could not turn from their revel in derision.
Then I saw the Congo, creeping through the black,
Cutting through the forest with a golden track,
Then along that river bank

A thousand miles
Tattooed cannibals danced in files;
Then I heard the boom of the blood-lust song
And a thigh-bone beating on a tin-pan gong. . . .
. . . . . .
A negro fairyland swung into view,
A minstrel river
Where dreams come true.
The ebony palace soared on high
Through the blossoming trees to the evening sky.
The inland porches and casements shone
With gold and ivory and elephant-bone. . . .
. . . . . .
Just then from the doorway, as fat as shoats,
Came the cake-walk princes in their long red coats,
Canes with a brilliant lacquer shine,
And tall silk hats that were red as wine.
And they pranced with their butterfly partners there,
Coal-black maidens with pearls in their hair,
Knee-skirts trimmed with the jessamine sweet,
And bells on their ankles and little black feet.
. . . . . .

Vachel Lindsay's published works include "The Congo," "General William Booth Enters into Heaven," "Adventures While Preaching the Gospel of Beauty," and "The Chinese Nightingale."

CHAPTER VIII

HENRY VAN DYKE, EDWIN MARKHAM, CALE YOUNG RICE, CONRAD AIKEN

Henry Van Dyke

There is a goodly list of writings to the credit of Henry Van Dyke, who has given such beautiful essays, prose poems and poetry to a large following of readers.

This popular essayist, certainly one of the most widely read in this country, was born in Germantown, Pa., on November 10, 1852, the son of the Reverend Henry Jackson and Henrietta Ashmead. He was graduated from the Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn in 1869, and in 1873 was awarded his Bachelor of Arts degree at Princeton University.

Dr. Van Dyke continued his studies at Princeton Theological Seminary, 1877, University of Berlin, 1877-9, Washington and Jefferson University, 1902, Wesleyan, 1903, Pennsylvania, 1906. Ellen Reid of Baltimore became his wife on December 13, 1881, Van Dyke having been ordained in the Presbyterian ministry in 1877. He was professor of English literature at Princeton until his appointment by President Wilson as minister to the Netherlands and Luxembourg, which honor he resigned after having filled the post with distinction for several years.

Dr. Van Dyke's "Blue Flower," "Ruling Passion" and "Fisherman's Luck" have become famous for their value as essays, but "The Builders and Other Poems" contains some of the most significant verses which have resulted from his poetical endeavors. "An Angler's Wish" runs:

I.

When tulips bloom in Union Square,
And timid breaths of vernal air
  Go wandering down the dusty town,
Like children lost in Vanity Fair;

When every long, unlovely row
Of westward houses stands aglow,
  And leads the eyes toward sunset skies
Beyond the hills where green trees grow;

Then weary seems the street parade,
And weary books, and weary trade:
  I'm only wishing to go a-fishing;
For this the month of May was made.

II.

I guess the pussy-willows now
Are creeping out on every bough
  Along the brook; and robins look
For early worms behind the plough.

The thistle-birds have changed their dun,
For yellow coats, to match the sun
  And in the same array of flame
The Dandelion Show's begun.

The flocks of young anemones
Are dancing round the budding trees:

Who can help wishing to go a-fishing
In days as full of joy as these?

III.

I think the meadow-lark's clear sound
Leaks upward slowly from the ground,
While on the wing, the bluebirds ring
Their wedding-bells to woods around.

The flirting chewink calls his dear
Behind the bush; and very near,
Where water flows, where green grass grows,
Song-sparrows gently sing, "Good cheer."

And, best of all, through twilight's calm
The hermit-thrush repeats his psalm.
How much I'm wishing to go a-fishing
In days so sweet with music's balm!

IV.

'T is not the proud desire of mine;
I ask for nothing superfine;
No heavy weight, no salmon great,
To break the record, or my line:

Only an idle little stream,
Whose amber waters softly gleam,
Where I may wade, through woodland shade,
And cast the fly, and loaf, and dream:

Only a trout or two, to dart
From foaming pools, and try my art:
No more I'm wishing—old-fashioned fishing,
And just a day on Nature's heart.

Dr. Van Dyke's works, both prose and poetry, include "The Reality of Religion," "The Story of the Psalms," "The National Sin of Literary Piracy," "The Poetry of Tennyson," "Sermons to Young Men," "The Christ Child in Art," "Little Rivers," "The Other Wise Man," "The Gospel for an Age of Doubt," "The First Christmas Tree," "The Builders and Other Poems," "Ships and Havens," "The Lost Word," "The Gospel for a World of Sin," "Fisherman's Luck," "The Toiling of Felix," "The Poetry of the Psalms," "The Friendly Year," "The Ruling Passion," "Preface to Counsel on Books and Reading," "The Blue Flower," "The Open Door," "Music and Other Poems," "The School of Life," "Essays in Application," "The Spirit of Christmas," "Americanism of Washington," "Days Off," "The House of Rimmon," "Out-of-Doors in the Holy Land," "Le Genie de l'Amerique," "The White Bees and Other Poems," "Collected Poems," "The Sad Shepherd," "The Mansion," "The Unknown Quantity."

He was also editor of "The Gateway Series of English Texts," "Select Poems of Tennyson," "Little Masterpieces of English Poetry" (6 volumes).

Dr. Van Dyke makes his home at Avalon, Princeton, New Jersey.

Edwin Markham

The name of Edwin Markham will be ever associated with that world-famous poem, "The Man with the Hoe," which found its inspiration in Millet's famous painting, and which was first published in 1899:

Bowed by the weight of centuries, he leans
Upon his hoe and gazes on the ground,
The emptiness of ages in his face,
And on his back the burden of the world.
Who made him dead to rapture and despair,
A thing that grieves not and that never hopes,
Stolid and stunned, a brother to the ox?
Who loosened and let down this brutal jaw?
Whose was the hand that slanted back this brow?
Whose breath blew out the light within this brain?
. . . . . .

Is this the Thing the Lord God made and gave
To have dominion over sea and land;
To trace the stars and search the heavens for power;
To feel the passion of Eternity?
Is this the Dream He dreamed who shaped the suns
And marked their ways upon the ancient deep?
Down all the stretch of Hell to its last gulf
There is no shape more terrible than this—
More tongued with censure of the world's blind greed—
More filled with signs and portents for the soul—
More fraught with danger to the universe.
. . . . . .

O masters, lords and rulers in all lands,
How will the Future reckon with this Man?
How answer his brute question in that hour
When whirlwinds of rebellion shake the world?
How will it be with kingdoms and with kings—
With those who shaped him to the thing he is—
When this dumb Terror shall reply to God
After the silence of the centuries?

This poem was hailed as "the battle-cry of the next thousand years."

In 1901 "Lincoln" appeared—a truly splendid study worthy of the man who had voiced Democracy's plea in "The Man with the Hoe." Among various poets' pictures of our beloved hero, these lines of Mr. Markham's have no superior:

LINCOLN, THE MAN OF THE PEOPLE

When the Norn Mother saw the Whirlwind Hour
Greatening and darkening as it hurried on,
She left the Heaven of Heroes and came down
To make a man to meet the mortal need.

She took the tried clay of the common road—
Clay warm yet with the ancient heat of Earth,
Dashed through it all a strain of prophecy;
Tempered the heap with thrill of human tears;
Then mixed a laughter with the serious stuff.
Into the shape she breathed a flame to light
That tender, tragic, ever-changing face.
Here was a man to hold against the world,
A man to match the mountains and the sea.
The color of the ground was in him, the red earth;
The smack and tang of elemental things:
The rectitude and patience of the cliff;
The good-will of the rain that loves all leaves;
The friendly welcome of the wayside well;
The courage of the bird that dares the sea;
The gladness of the wind that shakes the corn;
The mercy of the snow that hides all scars;
The secrecy of streams that make their way
Beneath the mountain to the rifted rock;
The undelaying justice of the light
That gives as freely to the shrinking flower
As to the great oak flaring to the wind—
. . . . . .

So came the Captain with the thinking heart;
And when the judgment thunder split the house,
Wrenching the rafters from their ancient rest,
He held the ridgepole up, and spiked again
The rafters of the Home. He held his place—
Held the long purpose like a growing tree—
Held on through blame and faltered not at praise.
And when he fell in whirlwind, he went down
As when a lordly cedar, green with boughs,
Goes down with a great shout upon the hills,
And leaves a lonesome place against the sky.

Mr. Markham has never been a prolific writer as poets of today go, but his verse has attained a distinction and fineness that some of our younger writers might do well to pattern from.

It was in March, 1915, that Mr. Markham published "The Shoes of Happiness," so called from the longest poem it contained—a long wait from the date of his prior volume of poems for those who love his work and have followed closely his career.

California extended an unusual honor to Mr. Markham, when the evening of April 30th was set aside as Markham Evening, and the poet was asked to read from his poems. At this time "Virgila" from "The Shoes of Happiness," which had been set to music by Edith Haines-Kuester, the well-known American composer, was sung for the first time.

"Virgila" reads as follows:

Had we two gone down the world together,
I had made fair ways for the feet of song,
And the world's fang been but a foam-soft feather,
The world that works us wrong.

With you the cloud of my life had broken,
And the heavens rushed up to their silver height:
That lone last peak of my soul had spoken,
That last peak lost in sight.

If you had but stayed when the old sweet wonder
Was a precious pain in my pulsing side!
Ah, why did you hurry our lives asunder—
You, born to be my bride?

What sent it upon me—my soul importunes—
All the grief of the world in a little span,
All the tears and fears, all the fates and fortunes
That the heart holds for man?

Is this, then, the pain that the first gods kneaded
Into all the joy that the strange world brings?
Did the tears fall into the heap unheeded,
These tears in mortal things?

Edwin Markham was born in Oregon City, Oregon, on April 23, 1852. He went to California in 1857, where he worked as a farmer, then as a blacksmith, and herded cattle and sheep during his boyhood days. Upon entering San José Normal School he specialized in ancient and modern languages, following this work in two western institutions of learning. He was married to Miss Anna Catherine Murphy in 1897. He was principal and superintendent of schools in California until 1889, and has written poems since his early boyhood for magazines and newspapers throughout the United States.

Cale Young Rice

Cale Young Rice is accredited with having written some of the most excellent poetry of the last decade as well as some of the best poetic dramas that American literature reveals.

Dixon, Kentucky, was the birthplace of this poet whose many lyrics have appeared in publications throughout the country.

"Now doubtless it would be edifying just here to tell you that I was preternaturally bookish at school and that I had devoured all the libraries within range by the time I was eight," says Mr. Rice. "Or, otherwise, that I rebelled against school authorities and began individual poetic tendencies beyond the scholastic pale. But nothing is further from the truth. I accepted school as a necessary evil of life—but also as a place to meet and conspire with other children to suck the orange of existence dry of 'fun.' Some remembrances I seem to have of affectionate teachers wishing to have me 'really' study and lead classes; but I was much too busy trying to win at tops and marbles, baseball and football, skating, swimming, dancing, hunting and fishing, to be lured from what I regarded as the chief end of man. And poetry, except the poetry of life, which made me shudder or thrill with delight and passion, I knew only from class recitation or from the Biblical influence which was so salutarily thrown about me.

"At fourteen or fifteen, however, I did begin to study, and to read a bit, and entered Cumberland University where I remained four happy years.

"But such years do not last. So before I knew it I was through with them and suddenly aware that I knew nothing about the Universe, or the direction I must take in it. Then to add to my perplexities, actual and philosophical, ambition began its game in me. To Harvard therefore I went—not, like Saul, to find my father's asses, but to discover just how much of a long-ears I was myself. And like Saul I found a kingdom. For not only did my deeper reading of poetry begin there but as I was taking my degrees in Philosophy I not only found mental freedom philosophically and religiously, but laid the basis for whatever poetic vision of life as a whole I had. So to Poetry, after a year's teaching, I was wedded. And though the two of us have undergone all the suffering and obloquy incidental to the poetic life in America where the struggle for great poetic achievement is, I believe, more difficult than in any other country, neither has sought the divorce court.

"Of the other wedding in my life, to the present Alice Hegan Rice, I have said enough in the songs I have written to her. With her I have seen much of the strangeness and beauty of the world, for we have travelled much, and all who know her know what a companion she is.

"My early efforts in poetry? Well, perhaps I should say first that I was fortunate in escaping academic guidance, for all that I know of that art was instinctive or learned out of school. Some present day radicals, whose excesses or pretences I have not swallowed, have thought me conservative; and many conservatives during the two decades of my poetic day have scored

me for being too free or radical. So if I must accept a tag, I suppose it must be that of liberalism—by which I mean a readiness to take poetry of any real kind from whatever source it comes—for any one creed can produce all too little of it. But the truth is that I think those distinctions, like the distinctions between realists, romanticists and classicists are wearisome and dangerous for the writer to get too conscious of. A poet must take his poetry from all of life if he wishes to write all his life—or any long portion of it. Self-consciousness and creed make for exhaustion.

"It was some such faith as this together with the belief that the supreme rule of poetic art, technically, is to let poetic emotion and instinct rather than creed mould the form of a poem, which has always guided me. As a consequence my earliest efforts—in a now extinct volume, 'From Dusk to Dusk'—were often of the crude free verse sort I condemn to-day. But I soon learned that even free verse rhythms, in order to be truly poetic, must not be out of harmony with the immemorially practised principles of verse music.

"My early difficulties with the poetic drama are what they would be today. I struggled to get the right dramatic material with a background that would be poetically inspiring; to do the fundamental thinking necessary to construct a modern logical play; and to write lines in the natural un-Elizabethan syntax which modernity and sincerity demand; yet to make sure they had the true poetic quality. To do this successfully is, I think, the finest achievement possible to a poet.

"What has contemporary American poetry ac-

complished? What is its influence? What its future? My answer is that I think the achievement of this poetry, against very great odds, has been splendid.

"In 1900 almost no portion of the public read modern poetry, it was not found on the shelves of the bookstores or libraries, and that poetry of great significance could be written by an American was beyond the conception of publishers, editors and public alike. Has a change come?

"Yes—and no. America is not yet a poet's paradise, and will never be except for the poet from abroad, who so easily finds exploitation here. But since the early years of the century the public has gradually become more interested in this primal art, the public libraries have had increasing demands for verse; and finally, since some very fine poets have arisen in America as well as abroad, an interest has culminated which has made it possible for the most freakish of freak verse writers to get in the limelight—and how they have danced!

"A reaction, as was inevitable, has set in, and there is now a saner tendency to put the freaks in the sideshow.

"What influence American poetry of today has had in determining America's present idealistic attitude toward the world, no one can say. In 1914 I expressed the belief, in a preface to 'Collected Plays and Poems,' that the future spirit of America and of American art would be internationalistic—or broadly human. To that belief I still hold. The world's greatest poets—Shakespeare, Coleridge, Shelley, Keats, Browning—have never striven to be merely nationalist or of the

soil. They have but sought the most poetic soil their genius was capable of tilling, and have tilled it with whatever national characteristics they possessed. So I believe the American poets of the future will seek whatever in America or in the world is poetically significant; for between provinciality and universality there can be but one choice. The American of the future who does not shed his provinciality and write for mankind, may attain success but not immortality. Only the provincial which has been of universal importance to the culture of mankind—like the Hebraic or the Greek—can abide; and America, I fear, has no such provinciality."

A typical example of Mr. Rice's writing appeared in *The Bellman,* that worthy journal where much estimable poetry is published, and from which the following is quoted:

AFTER THEIR PARTING

(A Woman Speaks)

You know that rock on a rocky coast,
Where the moon came up, a ruined ghost,
Distorted until her shape almost
    Seemed breaking?
Came up like a phantom silently
And dropped her shroud on the red night sea,
Then walked, a spectral mystery,
    Unwaking?

. . . . .

You know this? Then go back some day,
When I have gone the moonless way,
To that dark rock whereon we lay
    And waited;

And when the moon has arisen free,
Your soiling doubt shall slip from me,
And eased of unrest your heart shall be,
And sated.

"Wraiths and Realities," Mr. Rice's most recent work, shows in its contents some war reflections none of which surpass the lines in "Waste":

I flung a wild rose into the sea,
I know not why.
For swinging there on a rathe rose-tree,
By the scented bay and barberry,
Its petals gave all their sweet to me,
As I passed by.

And yet I flung it into the tide,
And went my way.
I climbed the gray rocks, far and wide,
And many a cove of peace I tried,
With none of them all to be satisfied,
The whole long day.

For I had wasted a beautiful thing,
Which might have won
Each passing heart to pause and sing,
On the sea-path there, of its blossoming,
And who wastes beauty shall feel want's sting,
As I had done.

There are also in this volume many poems suggestive of various nationalities such as the opening stanza of "Danse MacAbre":

I heard a great rattle of bones in the night,
And saw the dead rise from the earth—a sight!

They carried them lanterns of will-o'-the-wisps,
And their speech cackled and broke with lisps.

They flung shrouds off and got in a ring,
And knuckle to knuckle I saw them spring.
Their hair blew off, and skull to skull
They gabbled and danced, interminable.

"A Norse Song" which begins

Along the coasts of Nevermore
A lone loon cries,
The gray loon Despair,
With a heart that cannot rest.
His wail is the world's wail
For youth that never dies;
And I have listened to it
Till the tears are in my eyes,

is in interesting contrast to "Katenka's Lover," a Russian inspired theme.

Little Katenka took twelve weeds
And wove them into a wreath for her hair;
Buttercup, rattray and marguerite,
Parsley, clover and nettle were there.
"I want to behold in dreams," she said,
"In magic dreams my destined lover!"
And . . . she did; for a weed *bane-bred*
Of peace—little Katenka!

Deep dreams! so now the ikoned priests
Have carried her, at the funeral hour,
Out to her princely lover, Death,
In the ever-blossoming earth, his bower.

And she shall never again desire,
But only lie in his arms dreaming. . . .
Little Katenka, in a bride-tire
Of peace—little Katenka!

Mr. Rice's books include the following: "The Collected Plays and Poems," "At the World's Heart," "Porzia," "Far Quests," "The Immortal Lure," "Many Gods," "Nirvana Days," "A Night in Avignon," "Yolanda of Cyprus," "David," "Charles di Tocca," "Song-Surf" (published by Doubleday, Page & Co.), and "Trails Sunward," and "Earth and New Earth" (published by The Century Co.).

Conrad Aiken

"Every sensitive, imaginative, beauty-loving youth lives for a period a dream-life whose great preoccupations are love and death, dreamed in a dim borderland between the dusk and dawn of the ideal and the real. It is a delightful land, but one of unsure footing. Before the explorer is aware, he steps from sensuousness to the quicksand of sensuality, from a normal eroticism to the quag of neurosis. Conrad Aiken is the poet of this region and of the passionate shadows that populate it."

Thus declares a writer in the *New York Times Book Review*. But it is good that we have these poets just as we go through those stages of first love, first drink and all the other "firsts" encountered from the adolescent to the more mature stage.

It was in "Earth Triumphant" that Mr. Aiken gave us a picture of nature beautiful, complete with all its

various odors—a splendid votive offering to the senses of sight and smell.

"The Jig of Forslin" showed the dream world in perpetuation of life and the soul of every man, and here were indications of a growth of many promises.

While his more recent book, "Nocturne of Remembered Spring" fails to establish this promise, there is rare youth in these lines:

Mist goes up from the river to dim the stars, . . .
And flare of horns, and clang of cymbals, and drums;
And strew the glimmering floor with petals of roses
And remember, while rich music yawns and closes,
With a luxury of pain, how silence comes. . . .

It has been said that Mr. Aiken is a psychological poet, and this psychological quality is particularly demonstrated in these lines:

In the evening, as the lamps are lighted,
Sitting alone in his strange world,
He meditates; and through his musing hears
The tired footfalls of the dying day
Monotonously ebb and ebb away
Into the smouldering west;
And hears the dark world slowly come to rest.
Now, as the real world dwindles and grows dim,
His dreams come back to him:
Now, as one who stands

In the aquarium's gloom, by creeping sands,
Watching the glide of fish beneath pale bubbles,
The bubbles briefly streaming,
Cold and white and green, poured in silver,
He does not know if this is wake or dreaming;

But thinks to learn, reach out his hands, and swim. . . .
The music weaves about him, gold and silver;
The music chatters, the music sings,
The music sinks and dies.
Who dies, who lives? What leaves remain forever?
Who knows the secret of the immortal springs?
Who laughs, who kills, who cries?

We hold them all, they walk our dreams forever,
Nothing perishes in that haunted air,
Nothing but is immortal there.
And we ourselves, dying with all our worlds,
Will only pass the ghostly portal
Into another's dream; and so live on
Through dream to dream, immortal.

Conrad Aiken was born in Savannah, Ga., August 5, 1889. He graduated from Harvard in 1912, and married Jessie McDonald of Montreal, Canada, that same year. He lives in Boston.

Aside from Mr. Aiken's contributions to *The Dial* in 1917, he is the author of "Earth Triumphant and Other Tales," "Turns and Movies," "Nocturne of Remembered Spring," "The Jig of Forslin" and "Charnel Rose."

CHAPTER IX

ROBERT SERVICE, JOHN MCCRAE, EDGAR MIDDLETON

Robert Service

While the writer has never seen the royalty statements of Robert W. Service, it is probable that they would present a showing of figures that would be proof positive of just how financially successful poetry writing can be when the popular note is struck.

Service has been called "The American Kipling"—perhaps by the virtue that he is quoted almost as often as his older English contemporary across the sea.

While "The Songs of a Sourdough" and "The Ballads of a Cheechako" established his name and fame as a popular poet, he has done the best of his writings so far in "The Rhymes of a Red Cross Man."

An adventurer in the far North, lured by the promises of a gold fortune in the Yukon, like Balboa of old, he found a greater thing than that for which he sought. For here came the inspiration which resulted in such famous lines as these first two stanzas from "The Spell of the Yukon":

I wanted the gold, and I sought it;
  I scrabbled and mucked like a slave.
Was it famine or scurvy—I fought it;
  I hurled my youth into a grave.

I wanted the gold, and I got it—
Came out with a fortune last fall,—
Yet somehow life's not what I thought it,
And somehow the gold isn't all.

No! There's the land. (Have you seen it?)
It's the cussedest land that I know,
From the big, dizzy mountains that screen it
To the deep, deathlike valley below.
Some say God was tired when He made it;
Some say it's a fine land to shun;
Maybe; but there's some as would trade it
For no land on earth—and I'm one.

In his "Ballads of a Cheechako" he again is spokesman for the prospector and presents his song of the gold hunt in those vigorous lines of "The Trail of '98," which begin:

Gold! We leapt from our benches. Gold! We sprang from our stools.
Gold! We wheeled in the furrow, fired with the faith of fools.
Fearless, unfound, unfitted, far from the night and cold,
Heard we the clarion summons, followed the master-lure —Gold!

Men from the sands of the Sunland; men from the woods of the West;
Men from the farms and the cities, into the Northland we pressed.
Graybeards and striplings and women, good men and bad men and bold,
Leaving our homes and our loved ones, crying exultantly —"Gold!"

The story qualities of these poems is demonstrated by the fact that beginning with the well-known "Shooting of Dan McGrew" they have been adapted one by one into successful plays for the motion picture screen.

Within Service there was a desire that could not be quelled to express the various scenes and adventures through which he was living and so he gave us his poems of real men, "red blood men" they have been called, men who talk in a vigorous tongue, men whose primal instincts and passions spur them to labour, to dream, to achieve, to bow down before defeat—in fact, human men. These are the men of "The Spell of the Yukon."

Service, an ardent motor enthusiast, enlisted as an ambulance driver early in the war. Stories of the bravery of his exploits cannot be given here, but he has faced the shell-stormed road with his loads of wounded, he has lived the things he writes, and just as he has analyzed the Yukon man, so has he interpreted the struggles of the soldier of to-day.

The war stories that Robert Service tells in "Rhymes of a Red Cross Man" are among the most picturesque things that poetry has produced as a result of the World War. The same vivid stroke that splashed the pages of his Yukon poems with life and adventure is again evidenced with even a stronger amount of feeling than in his earlier work.

Among these poems is the dramatic tale of "Jean Desprez." Here Mr. Service pictures a peasant boy of France, who gives a crucified Zouave a cup of cold water during a German invasion in his home village. The effect of this upon the Hun invaders produces

A roar of rage! They seize the boy; they tear him fast away.
The Prussian Major swings around; no longer is he gay.
His teeth are wolfishly agleam; his face all dark with spite;
"Go, shoot the brat," he snarls, "that dare defy our Prussian might.
Yet stay! I have another thought. I'll kindly be, and spare;
Quick! give the lad a rifle charged, and set him squarely there,
And bid him shoot, and shoot to kill. Haste! Make him understand
The dying dog he fain would save shall perish by his hand."

But the French peasant lad, in spite of the pleas of the Zouave to shoot him, turns the gun upon the Prussian Major instead, and shoots him dead.

And then there is that little story of "Cocotte," the French girl, whose lover has been called in the war, and who has left her "the rose-wreathed villa at Viroflay," where they lived together before the war. In Saint Lazare, Cocotte sees two wounded Poilus, one, "a bit of a boy, was blind," and its effect upon her is told by Service as follows:

"How he stirred me, this blind boy, clinging
Just like a child to his crippled chum.
But I did not cry. Oh no; a singing
Came to my heart for a year so dumb,
Then I knew that at three-and-twenty,
There is wonderful work to be done,
Comfort and kindness and joy in plenty,
Peace and light and love to be won.

Oh, thought I, could mine eyes be given
To one who will live in the dark alway!
To love and to serve—'twould make life Heaven
Here in my villa at Viroflay.
So I left my Poilus: and now you wonder
Why today I am so elate. . . .
Look! In the glory of sunshine yonder
They're bringing my blind boy in at the gate."

In the concluding stanza of "Young Fellow My Lad," Service presents in his own best style the spiritual side of those words "carry on"—

"So you'll live, you'll live, Young Fellow My Lad,
In the gleam of the evening star,
In the wood-note wild and the laugh of the child,
In all sweet things that are.
And you'll never die, my wonderful boy,
While life is noble and true;
For all our beauty and hope and joy
We will owe to our lads like you."

Robert Service was born in Preston, England, on January 16, 1874, the son of Robert Service, manager of Preston Bank, and Emily Parker of Preston. He was educated at Hillhead Public School, Glasgow, and afterwards served an apprenticeship with the Commercial Bank of Scotland in the same city.

Service emigrated to Canada and settled on Vancouver Island where he engaged in farming but gave this up for his explorer's life, traveling up and down the Pacific Coast, experiencing many hardships.

Tiring of this he finally joined the staff of the Canadian Bank of Commerce, in Victoria, B. C., in

1905 and was transferred to White House, Yukon Territory, and then to Dawson.

Eight years in the Yukon have resulted in his metamorphosis from a bank employee to one of our most important poets of to-day.

His books include "Songs of a Sourdough"; "Ballads of a Cheechako"; "Trail of '98"; "Rhymes of a Rolling Stone"; "The Pretender"; and "Rhymes of a Red Cross Man."

John McCrae

If one should be asked, "What Canadian poets are contributing to contemporary American poetry?" the answer would be "Robert Service" and there the average reader in the United States would stop.

The Canadian regiments have played one of the most courageous, spectacular and effective parts in the World War and it is natural that from their ranks should come poets. And John McCrae is entitled to a place among our contemporary American poets although the man himself has paid "the last full measure of devotion."

Spontaneous and extensive recognition greeted the inspired lines, "In Flanders' Fields" for here was a depth of feeling and experience of tragedy that placed it in the fore of war poems.

While the following from "In Flanders' Fields" is perhaps the best example of this lieutenant-colonel's work, he has left behind a number of other poems equally as beautiful which have just been published by Putnams. "In Flanders' Fields" is now known to

half the English speaking world, and has been translated into a score of languages.

IN FLANDERS' FIELDS

In Flanders' fields, the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly,
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved; and now we lie
In Flanders' fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe!
To you, from failing hands, we throw
The torch. Be yours to hold it high!
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders' fields.

John McCrae was born in Guelph, Ontario, the son of Colonel and Mrs. David McCrae. In civilian life he held the position of lecturer in pathology and medicine at the Medical School, McGill University. Early in 1914, McCrae who had just arrived in London cabled to Canada, offering his services. He was appointed surgeon to the First Brigade of Canadian Artillery. He was with the guns along the Ypres sector for a continuous period of fourteen months and here found inspiration for his poems. His health was undermined by the strain of constant duty and he died

in France from pneumonia, complicated by meningitis, on January 28, 1918.

Jesse Edgar Middleton

Jesse Edgar Middleton, with his "Sea Dogs and Men at Arms," properly designated a Canadian book of songs, has given us a breezy volume of the sea and sailor men in war times.

His poems fairly bristle with terms of the sea, when he describes a leviathan of the sea in "Missing at Lloyd's," as follows:

Arch and gusset and sturdy truss
  Riveted strong and true.
Plates as firm as the hoary rocks
  Dipping beneath the blue.
Spinning turbine and shining shaft,
  Piston and dynamo!
With a laugh at the snoring blast
  Into the seas we go.
. . . . .
Phosphor's light on the raving sea
  Giving us ghostly cheer!
Reeling, staggering, nor'-nor'-west
  Into the gale we steer.
Arch and rivet and truss give way,
  Turbine and piston cease.
Slanting decks and a rocket light!
  Death—and the hills of peace.

Mr. Middleton can write as well in other forms, to witness, "The Finale," in a section in "Sea Dogs and Men at Arms," which he chooses to call "Moods."

THE FINALE

Now with my comrades,
Rank on serried rank,
I march, with soldier laugh
And rough-hewn jest,
Past the fair daisy bank,
Then take my evening rest
In bosky shades,
While through the inky glades
The nightingale
Hymns his alluring note.
Above the bivouac
The moon sails high,
The cruel five-franc moon,
Glaring on such as I,
Doomed, doomed to die,
On the red sod to lie,
With fixed blue-purple stare
Away from love,
Away from care.

Mr. Middleton's contrasting study of peace and war is forcibly pictured in his poem of that name:

PEACE AND WAR

A pleasant river, clear and blue,
  Went singing to the sea.
The sunbeam joined them hand in hand
  To dance the melody.
The courtly rushes bowed their heads
  As nobles to the Queen,
And saw, reflected in the wave,
  Their coats of Lincoln green.

God made such horrors? Count that word a lie.
God made the pleasant river, clear and blue,
Peace is His handiwork, and love, and joy,
While man makes sewers—and artillery,
Grim bayonets, and howitzers and shell,
The battle-squadron surging through the tides,
Ten thousand hecatombs of reeking red
And all the vile magnificence of War.

Jesse E. Middleton is the only son of the Rev. E. Middleton of the Canadian Methodist Church, and was born in Wellington County, Ontario, Canada, on November 3, 1872. His father is of English birth, but his mother, Margaret Agar, is a native Canadian. His home education, which was very thorough, was supplemented by High School training.

After four years as a school teacher, Mr. Middleton joined the publishing firm of Burrows Brothers of Cleveland, Ohio, and spent several years there working on the Jesuit Relations.

He entered journalism in 1899 as political reporter of *The Montreal Herald* in Quebec City, the provincial capital. Later he was associated with *The Quebec Chronicle.*

In 1903, Mr. Middleton came to Toronto as music-critic of *The Mail and Empire* and after a year of service took up similar work on *The Toronto Daily News.* He retired from critical work to write a daily column of paragraphs and light verse under the heading "On the Side." This "feature" has awakened a good deal of favourable comment. Mr. Middleton is well-known and highly regarded in Canada. Some of his work is

not unknown to the readers of the American magazines.

He was married in 1899 to Miss Bessie Alberta Jackson of London, Ontario.

CHAPTER X

JOYCE KILMER, ALAN SEEGER, CHARLES DIVINE, JOHN MCCLURE

Joyce Kilmer

On a Sunday morning in August, 1918, the great daily papers throughout our country carried this headline:

JOYCE KILMER, POET,
IS KILLED IN ACTION.

It was a news item of universal interest, for Joyce Kilmer wrote "Trees," and this small lyric of exquisite beauty and simplicity is doubtless one of the best-known among its contemporaries.

TREES

(For Mrs. Henry Mills Alden)

I think that I shall never see
A poem lovely as a tree.

A tree whose hungry mouth is prest
Against the earth's sweet flowing breast;

A tree that looks at God all day,
And lifts her leafy arms to pray;

A tree that may in Summer wear
A nest of robins in her hair;

Upon whose bosom snow has lain;
Who intimately lives with rain.

Poems are made by fools like me,
But only God can make a tree.

The following letter from Walter Irving Clarke of Auburndale, Mass., appeared in *The New York Times* soon after the poet's death:

"I have been looking at the tree tops silhouetted against the sun's sky, and again against the moonlight, and reverently recalling Joyce Kilmer's poem, 'Trees':

I think that I shall never see
A poem lovely as a tree.

. . . . .

Poems are made by fools like me,
But only God can make a tree.

"News has just come of Joyce Kilmer's sacrifice of his life on the fields of France. From his boyhood on the banks of the old Raritan, through the fruitful years of his poetic young manhood to his heroism in the fight for freedom, Joyce Kilmer grew strong and beautiful as a tree in the open under the sky. His tribute to the trees is immortal; his tribute to humanity is celestial:

I think that I shall never scan
A tree as lovely as a man.

. . . . .

A tree depicts divinest plan,
But God himself lives in a man."

Christopher Morley, writing in *The Philadelphia Evening Ledger* says: "Joyce Kilmer died as he lived

—'in action.' He found life intensely amusing, unspeakably interesting; his energy was unlimited, his courage stout. He attacked life at all points, rapidly gathered its complexities about him, and the more intricate it became the more zestful he found it. Nothing bewildered him, nothing terrified. By the time he was thirty he had attained an almost unique position in literary circles. He lectured on poetry, he interviewed famous men of letters, he was poet, editor, essayist, critic, anthologist. He was endlessly active, full of delightful mirth and a thousand schemes for outwitting the devil of necessity that hunts all brainworkers."

Kilmer, in a letter to the author of this book written shortly before his death, declared that his earlier efforts in poetry were utterly worthless save one poem called "Pennies" which was eventually published in "Trees and Other Poems."

"I want all of my poems written before that forgotten," wrote Kilmer. "They were only the exercises of an amateur, imitations, useful only as technical training. If what I nowadays write is considered poetry, then I became a poet in November, 1913.

"All that poetry can be expected to do is to give pleasure of a noble sort to its readers, leading them to the contemplation of that Beauty which neither words nor sculptures nor pigments can do more than faintly to reflect, and to express the mental and spiritual tendencies of the people of the lands and times in which it is written. I have very little chance to read contemporary poetry out here, but I hope it is reflecting the virtues which are blossoming on the blood-soaked soil of this land—courage and self-abnegation, and

love, and faith—this last not faith in some abstract goodness, but faith in God and His Son and the Holy Ghost, and in the Church which God Himself founded and still rules. France has turned to her ancient faith with more passionate devotion than she has shown for centuries. I believe that America is learning the same lesson from the war, and is cleansing herself of cynicism and pessimism and materialism and the lust for novelty which has hampered our national development. I hope that our poets already see this tendency and rejoice in it—if they do not they are unworthy of their craft.

"I would venture to surmise that the extravagances and decadence of the so-called 'renascence of poetry' during the last five years—a renascence distinguished by the celebration of the queer and the nasty instead of the beautiful—have made the poet seem as silly a figure to the contemporary American as he seemed to the Englishman of the eighteen-nineties, when the 'æsthetic movement' was at its foolish height."

Various tributes and appreciations of Joyce Kilmer have followed his death, conspicuous among which is Richardson Wright's intimate study of him, published in *The Bellman*:

"The better poet Kilmer became," says Mr. Wright, "the less like a poet he acted. And this better poetry—the poetry of simplicity and sincerity toward men and the things men come in contact with—was set down in those thirty-one titles that comprise 'Trees and Other Poems.'

"I believe that he wrote easily and spontaneously, labouring more with his pipe than his pen. 'The

Twelve-Forty-Five,' if I remember rightly, was written on the 12.45. Strange that he should have said then—

> 'Perhaps Death roams the hills to-night
> And we rush forth to give him fight.'

and that was how he died—on a patrol rushed forth, on a little hill."

Joyce Kilmer was born in New Brunswick, New Jersey, December 6, 1886. He attended Rutgers College between 1904 and 1906, and secured his degree of Bachelor of Arts in Columbia University in 1908. He married Aline Murray of Norfolk, Virginia, in 1908. Upon receiving his degree, he became an instructor in Latin in the High School at Morristown, New Jersey. But this appealed to him only a short time, and in 1909 he became an editorial assistant on the Standard Dictionary, later editor of *The Churchman,* and in 1913 a member of the staff of the *New York Times Review of Books.* Much of his verse has appeared in such magazines as *The Bellman, The Boston Transcript, Colliers, The Outlook,* and *The Catholic World.*

Just 17 days after Congress declared war Kilmer enlisted in the 7th Infantry and soon attained the office of sergeant. He was acting unofficially in the 165th Infantry of the old Rainbow Division as adjutant to Major Wm. J. Donovan when he met death July 30 near Villers-sur-Fère and none in command surpassed the American poet soldier in courage according to his comrades. How well might Kilmer's own lines to that poet who died but a short time before him be applied:

IN MEMORY OF RUPERT BROOKE

In alien earth, across a troubled sea,
  His body lies that was so fair and young.
  His mouth is stopped, with half his songs unsung;
His arm is still, that struck to make men free.

But let no cloud of lamentation be
  Where, on a warrior's grave, a lyre is hung.
  We keep the echoes of his golden tongue,
We keep the vision of his chivalry.

So Israel's joy, the loveliest of kings,
  Smote now his harp, and now the hostile horde.
To-day the starry roof of Heaven rings
  With psalms a soldier made to praise his Lord;
And David rests beneath Eternal wings,
  Song on his lips, and in his hand a sword.

Alan Seeger

While it has been the endeavor of the author to limit this volume solely to American poets who are writing today, the World War has demanded the full price from some of these soldier poets since this work was begun.

Alan Seeger's world famous poem, "I Have a Rendezvous with Death," is one of the most popular of the better known war poems. It has reached the hearts of thousands, and will go down in the history of the present war verse with the best of his English contemporary, Rupert Brooke.

Alan Seeger was born in New York on June 22, 1888. His parents, who were of old New England

stock, moved to Staten Island when Alan was but a year old. He was educated in the Staten Island Academy, the Horace Mann School, and Harvard College. Before the war was three weeks old, Seeger, with a number of other Americans, enlisted in the Foreign Legion of France. It was a fight and for France, and for the France which he loved.

Seeger had hoped to have been in Paris on Decoration Day to read before the statue of Lafayette and Washington, his "Ode in Memory of the American Volunteers Fallen for France," written by him at the request of a committee of American residents, but his leave of absence did not arrive in time. Some critics have found this ode the best of his work.

"A nobler ode has not come my way," says William Archer in his introduction to Alan Seeger's published poems, from which the following is quoted:

"Ay, it is fitting on the holiday,
Commemorative of our soldier dead,
When, with the sweet flowers of our New England May,
Hiding the lichened stones by fifty years made gray—
Their graves in every town are garlanded,
That pious tribute should be given too
To our intrepid few
Obscurely fallen here beyond the seas.

"Now heaven be thanked, we gave a few brave drops;
Now heaven be thanked, a few brave drops were ours.

"There, holding still, in frozen steadfastness,
Their bayonets toward the beckoning frontiers,
They lie—our comrades—lie among their peers,
Clad in the glory of fallen warriors,
Grim clusters under thorny trellises,

Dry, furthest foam upon disastrous shores,
Leaves that made last year beautiful, still strewn
Even as they fell, unchanged, beneath the changing moon;
And earth in her divine indifference
Rolls on, and many paltry things and mean
Prate to be heard and caper to be seen.
But they are silent, calm; their eloquence
Is that incomparable attitude;
No human presences their witness are,
But summer clouds and sunset crimson-hued,
And showers and night winds and the northern star,
Nay, even our salutations seem profane,
Opposed to their Elysian quietude;
Our salutations calling from afar,
From our ignobler plane
And undistinction of our lesser parts;
Hail, brothers, and farewell; you are twice blest, brave hearts;
Double your glory is who perished thus,
For you have died for France and vindicated us."

But in spite of the perfection in these lines, it will be these more popular lines that shall link his name with the poetry of the World War and the period in which he wrote:

I HAVE A RENDEZVOUS WITH DEATH

I have a rendezvous with Death
At some disputed barricade,
When Spring comes back with rustling shade
And apple-blossoms fill the air—
I have a rendezvous with Death
When Spring brings back blue days and fair.

It may be he shall take my hand
And lead me into his dark land
And close my eyes and quench my breath—
It may be I shall pass him still.
I have a rendezvous with Death
On some scarred slope of battered hill,
When Spring comes round again this year
And the first meadow-flowers appear.

God knows 'twere better to be deep
Pillowed in silk and scented down,
Where Love throbs out in blissful sleep,
Pulse nigh to pulse, and breath to breath,
Where hushed awakenings are dear. . . .
But I've a rendezvous with Death
At midnight in some flaming town,
When Spring trips north again this year,
And I to my pledged word am true,
I shall not fail that rendezvous.

Of his death, William Archer writes:

"On July 1, the great advance began. At six in the evening of July 4, the Legion was ordered to clear the enemy out of the village of Belloy-en-Santerre. Alan Seeger advanced in the first rush, and his squad was enfiladed by the fire of six German machine guns, concealed in a hollow way. Most of them went down, and Alan among them, wounded in several places. But the following waves of attack were more fortunate. As his comrades came up to him, Alan cheered them on; and as they left him behind, they heard him singing a marching song in English:

Accents of ours were in the Fierce mêlée.

They took the village, they drove the invaders out; but for some reason unknown—perhaps a very good one—the battlefield was left unvisited that night. Next morning, Alan Seeger lay dead."

There is little to add. He wrote his own best epitaph in the "Ode":

> And on those furthest rims of hallowed ground
> Where the forlorn, the gallant charge expires,
> When the slain bugler has long ceased to sound,
> And on the tangled wires
> The last wild rally staggers, crumbles, stops,
> Withered beneath the shrapnel's iron showers:—
> Now heaven be thanked, we gave a few brave drops,
> Now heaven be thanked, a few brave drops were ours.

His death was briefly noticed in one or two French papers. *The Matin* published a translation of part of the poem, "Champagne, 1914-15" and remarked that "Cyrano de Bergerac would have signed it." But France had no time, even if she had the knowledge, to realize the greatness of the sacrifice that had been made for her. That will come later. One day France will know that this unassuming soldier of the Legion,

> Who, not unmindful of the antique debt,
> Come back the generous path of Lafayette,

was one whom even she may be proud to have reckoned among her defenders.

Charles Divine

It was the War that brought to the full fruit the poems of Rupert Brooke, Alan Seeger and John Mc-

Crae. It is the war that has developed Private Charles Divine, 27th Division, U.S.A., into a poet splendidly worth while.

Before the war, Divine was a newspaper reporter on *The New York Sun* and in idle moments he wrote verses that appeared in *Life, Smart Set,* and various other magazines. There was a certain charm in these which augured well for the reporter's future as a poet, but it was after his enlistment in the army that as a soldier poet he showed himself able to portray the real spirit of the American citizen soldier.

Under the title of "City Ways and Company Streets" the best of his soldier poems and poems of civil life have been brought out by Moffat, Yard & Company. Divine makes no attempt to gain exquisite word effects. He writes simply, without pretense, of camp life, of its reactions upon the soldier, and of his dreams of the past and the hope of the future.

"At the Lavender Lantern" is as honest and charming a bit of verse as ever came from a poet turned soldier:

I wonder who is haunting the little snug café,
That place, half restaurant and home, since we have gone away;
The candled dimness, smoke and talk, and tables brown and bare—
But no one thinks of tablecloths when love and laughter's there.

I wonder if it's crowded still, three steps below the street,
Half hidden from the passing town, where even poets eat;

I wonder if the girls still laugh, the girls whose art was play,
I wonder who the fellows are that try to make them gay.

Some said it was Bohemia, this little haunt we knew,
Where hearts were high and fortunes low, and onions in the stew,
I wonder if it's still the same, the after dinner ease—
Bohemia is in the heart, and hearts are overseas.

Oh, great were all the problems that we settled there, with wine,
And fates of many nations were disposed of, after nine,
But France has braved a fate that brought us swarming to her shore—
I wonder who is sitting at the table near the door.

I wonder who is haunting the little snug café,
That place, half restaurant and home, since we have gone away;
I wonder if they miss me, I don't suppose they do,
As long as there are art and girls, and onions in the stew.

Mr. Grant M. Overton of *The New York Sun* finds in Divine's verse "the absence of hackneyed ideas and worn old phrases which are the sole stock of most camp verse" and declares that "he writes not for the thousands but for the tens of thousands."

Divine is a real poet for he never tries to write of things which he has not seen nor felt.

"The Moonlight Scrubbers" demonstrates this aptness.

Far down the vistaed, tent-lined street,
From Blue Ridge Mountains pours the sweet

Night-kissed bouquet of oak and pine
That stings the head like potent wine.
Here soldiers sit bent over tubs
And wash their clothes with rhythmic rubs.
Through leaves, white-tipped, each open space
Floods moonlight, patterned songs, and lace;
A silver hush on moon-sprayed ground
Breathes music sweeter than a sound.
Where beauty is, are loves, desires,
Night's vague and vibrant softness fires;
Adventures brighten in the South
Where romance calls from full-lipped mouth—
And see! the lifted arms hang still,
A moment's doubt that guns can kill.
Then scrubbing hands forget the night:
"Who's got the soap? The grease sticks tight!"

Charles Divine was born January 20, 1889, at Binghamton, New York. In a letter written just before he sailed for France he wrote, "I don't even know if I was born a poet. There is no record that my father announced to the employees of his insurance office the next day: 'Boys, have a cigar! We've got a little poet down at our house.'

"I learned later that I was born in a house, and that the house stood close to the shore of the shady Chenango River. But neither of my parents put as much emphasis on these facts as they did on the portentous circumstance that their son was born on a 'Sunday evening, when the church bells rang.' The quotation became a familiar one. All through my early years the distinctive augury rang in my ears more than the church bells ever did. The hand of fate had been clearly seen pulling the bell rope. But nothing ever

came of this deeply religious significance except that two of my uncles became ministers.

"I had two grandfathers. One was a soldier in the Civil War, a farmer and a school-teacher. The other was a canal boat skipper.

"Of the events of my youth, I recall going to public school, a fist-fight with the bully, and getting licked! Selling newspapers. Buying a purple necktie. Spilling sarsaparilla on it. Getting the nickname 'Chick,' which still survives. Writing the school notes for a local newspaper at a penny an inch. Making Col. Roosevelt my hero. Graduating as class orator (cause and effect). Summers spent reporting on the *Binghamton Herald* and *Press,* or 'haying it' on my grandfather's farm.

"In the fall of 1907 I entered Cornell University, where for three months I went to bed at night with a breaking heart because the fraternity I liked best hadn't asked me to join. At last the 'bid' came and great exultation! I had entered the law college, but in February, at the beginning of the second term, I realized that I would make but a poor sort of lawyer, and so switched to the College of Arts and Sciences. Subsequent events followed in this manner: Three years in the Arts College. Writing for the *Cornell Daily Sun, The Widow,* and *The Cornellian,* thus helping my father work my way through college. Learning to roll the makings and sing 'close harmony.' Attending more clubs than studies. An absence of a year from college, spent as the telegraph editor of the *Binghamton Republican* and on a cattleboat trip to Europe. The motley crew of cattlemen. One looked

like a murderer. The foul, hot bunks in the fo'c's'le. Sleeping at night on bales of hay under an open hatchway and the stars. The continent. Three weeks in Paris. Broke in Liverpool. Fell in again with the 'murderer,' who bought me my supper and passage home.

"Return to college. Making up a year and a half's work in one. Being graduated in June, 1912. Going to New York City in July. Joining the staff of *The Sun* (elegant for 'I gotta job as reporter'). Covering banquets, bread lines, murders, gunmen, millionaires, Roosevelt, Wilson, East Side, Fifth Avenue, Chinatown, Bowery, the unemployed, society's divorces, subway accidents, suffrage speeches, suicides, and more Roosevelt—when *The Sun* made me its staff correspondent for a year with this hero of my youth, who improved his right to that pedestal on closer acquaintance.

"Further events: living in Washington Square and Greenwich Village. Growing to love the following: a ride on a Fifth Avenue 'bus, the first cigarette after breakfast, the stories of Booth Tarkington, Joseph Conrad, and Eugene Manlove Rhodes, the poems of anybody, white sails on a blue horizon, open fires in winter, strawberry shortcakes in summer, winding city streets, the walk home from the office at 2 a.m., the wind from the sea, the melancholy tooting of the river-boats at night. Growing to feel an intense hatred for the following: toast without butter, girls who puff cigarettes like a steam launch going phut-phut-phut, Russian novels in which everybody commits suicide except the author, pessimistic people, optimistic

people who talk about their optimism, going to bed at night, getting up in the morning, coffee without cream, soiled napkins, fat greasy Germans, fat greasy people, rejection slips, and cold weather.

"Resigning from *The Sun* in October, 1916, to have a try at magazine work. Writing stories and verses. Getting some accepted. Getting more rejected. The United States in the War. Trying to enlist and being rejected twice for underweight, wondering, fatuously, what to do next. Hegira to Binghamton. Cottage by the river. Lots of sleep and rustic diet. Gained weight. Appearing at the Binghamton armory for another physical examination. First drinking many quarts of water. Passed examination!

"July 23, 1917, a private of Co. H., 1st Infantry, N. Y. N. G., the captain of which was an old school chum. Drilling. Blisters. Hiking. More blisters. August, a troop train to Van Cortlandt Park, New York City. The farewell parade of the New York guardsmen down Fifth Avenue. September, a troop train to Camp Wadsworth, Spartanburg, S. C. A wilderness, at first. The sport of kings—bunking with private soldiers, the best companions in the world! Raising a mustache for foreign service. December, still in camp! The breaking up of the old 'First' Infantry in order to fill other regiments of the division up to the European war strength. Transferring to the Sanitary Train, where there was another company of Binghamton lads I knew. Talking to a captain, an old friend, who said seductively: 'Chick, if you want to start for France by the fifteenth of January, join the new outfit I'm getting up.' Joining it. Mustache

for foreign service growing fast. January 15, still in camp. February 15, still in camp. March 15, ditto. April 15, ditto. (Unfair to mustache.) May 15, ditto. At last a troop train to an embarkation camp. Another period of waiting several endless weeks. Throbbing mental question: Why doesn't the President put me in a branch of the service where I'll get somewhere? Oh, why didn't I wait to be drafted and get there first? . . . Then, at length, my transport. . . .

"Being with sanitary troops, I expect to go through the war unharmed and come back and be run over by a baby carriage."

John McClure

John McClure of Oklahoma, youthful writer of modest airs, is sponsored by that able critic, Mr. H. L. Mencken, one of the editors of *Smart Set,* author of serious and not so serious critiques and who declares that his judgment of poetry is based solely on the beauty of poetry. He says, "I have little love for long or ambitious poems. My favorites are such men as Heinrich Heine, Robert Herrick, Thomas Campion, Burns at his best, the minor Elizabethans, old ballads and folksongs, Mother Goose. Simple airs and melodies are what delight me in literature most keenly. I mean to say that it is such verse as the above that has influenced me most in my own work. I've a great deal of affection for all good English verse, bar none.

"My only observation on American poetry had better be this, which puzzles me; out of a great many poets who do occasional splendid things, there is not

one who does consistently fine work, not one who is a poet of large significance, unless perhaps Sara Teasdale. I have great admiration and respect for her."

Mr. McClure first appeared an object for consideration as a poet in the pages of *The Smart Set* and his collected poems, many of which had appeared in this periodical, were afterwards published under the title of "Airs and Ballads."

When Mr. Mencken finds a poet or a writer of any sort in whom he believes, his belief is without stint as is his enthusiasm. For example, he writes in his magazine: "What I find in these modest airs (the poems of John McClure) is what the late Elijah found in his still small voice; an assurance and a criticism—the first of the making of songs is yet a living art among us, yet young, yet adroit, above all yet natural and innocent. In brief, McClure is the born poet, the poet, first and last, the poet full-fledged from the start, as opposed to all your stock company of sweating poetizers. His simple and perfect songs are to the tortured contraptions of the self-consecrated messiahs of prosody, with their ding-dong repetitions, their chopped off lines, their cheap shocks, their banal theorizings, their idiotic fustian—these songs of his are to such tedious gabblings as the sonorous lines of Swinburne were to the cacophonous splutters of Browning, the poet of pedagogues and old maids, male and female. What we have here is the Schubert complex—the whole pack of professors and polyphonists routed by a shepherd playing a pipe."

Whether one shares Mr. Mencken's whole-hearted

enthusiasm or not, John McClure's simple songs may best be judged by his "Elf's Song":

She came in the garden walking
When shadows begin to steal;
She trod upon a wing o' mine
And broke it with her heel.

She was a very queen, I think,
A queen from the West,
I should have only smiled
Had she stepped on my breast.

But I have told nobody,
I have told nobody yet!
I have told nobody—
Only the violet.

Or the opening lines to "The Celts":

We are the grey dreamers
With nets of moonlight
That always go a-hunting
About the fall o' night.

True, there are some immature spots in his work. There is a fondness for comparisons to jewels that is similar to George Sterling, over-use of such trite and inexpressive words as "red gold," "white silver," "lady," "hoary head," and "wee." But these are only specks on the surface of such lines as:

But she shall dress more strangely still:
In all men's eyes she shall be seen
To wear my little silver dreams
Like tinkling trinkets of a queen.

Ay, queenlike, she shall move them all
To adoration and desire;
For she shall wear my golden dreams
As though they were a robe of fire.

Or in his lines called "Man to Man":

Better it were, my brother,
You twain had never met,
Then were no hearts broken
And no dream to forget.

Now you must not remember,
After you are gone,
The mystic magic of her eyes
At twilight nor at dawn.

Now you must not remember
The songs her red lips sing
Of love and lovers' ecstasy
At dawn or evening.

An interesting comment on McClure's work was recently made to me by one of his contemporaries:

"John McClure's 'Airs and Ballads' impress me as the work of a man who has not (and perhaps, cannot) outgrow the impulse to enthusiasm which is characteristic of young writers of the romantic school. There is in his poems a certain *naïveté*, a certain artless simplicity which his very real lyrical ability makes quite charming. In reading him I feel as though I were in the presence of an unusually well-bred youth who wishes to forget his 'good breeding' in favor of a more impulsive and less *'civilisé'* attitude toward life and

toward his own experiences. The result is not without beauty (at times, as in 'The Lass of Galilee' the author reaches a very high mark of poetic feeling), but at the same time I imagine that I detect the note of 'fabrication'; not the species of deliberate fabrication practised by the great decadents and lovers of artifice (as Huysmans, Baudelaire, Mèndes, Rimbaud, 'Maldoror' and others) but a kind of straining after pure simplicity which it is very hard to succeed in—especially in these days when nothing can escape the influence of the cosmopolitan spirit. . . . However, I like McClure; I like him because he has lyrical charm, because he is indifferent to all the ceremonials of adoration for the Muse of Poetry. McClure is an independent: poetry is not a ritual with him, but a simple, human need. I think that, if he should ever acquire subtlety, he could with his technical ability turn out some very powerful things. At present he is a singer, a 'troubadour'—and perhaps well content to remain one."

Out in Oklahoma with its sun-baked roads, fields of corn and wheat and cotton, McClure lived and wrote until the war when he entered service in the 394th Cavalry. It must be gratifying to Oklahoma and the Middle West to know that Oklahoma has produced an American poet in interesting contrast to those of the New England states and the East.

McClure was born in Ardmore on December 19, 1893, of a Southern family of Scotch Irish descent. He is a graduate of the University of Oklahoma, of which he was later an assistant librarian.

In 1913 and 1914 he was in Paris with Henry McCullough, who was then studying art.

"I did nothing whatever there," says Mr. McClure, "except catch *vers libre,* from which I believe I have recovered."

"Poetry? . . . " he writes,
"The voice that leaps up
"With the spring water
"And thunders
"Out of the mountain."

Mr. McClure is a member of the national hobo fraternity "Quo Vadis" and has tramped about 2,000 miles in the Southwest.

He has also compiled and edited "The Stag's Horn-Book," a bachelor's anthology of verse.

CHAPTER XI

CHARLES WHARTON STORK, GEORGE STERLING, LOUIS UNTERMEYER, JOHN GOULD FLETCHER, JOHN HALL WHEELOCK

Charles Wharton Stork

Like some great morality play written in lines of clear poetic beauty, is Charles Wharton Stork's "Sea and Bay," which he chooses to call a poem of New England. This limitation, however, is wrong, for it might more properly be called *The Journey of Every Youth* as it is the story of Man's spiritual development—his restlessness in the bay—the home; his longing for the sea—the world and then its climactic fusion of sea and bay.

> So that at last within me bay and sea,
> My peaceful boyhood and my stormy prime,
> Unite their warring natures and are one.

This narrative poem is the best of Mr. Stork's poetic works, superior to "The Queen of Orplede," or "Day Dreams of Greece," or even that original imaginative poem, "Flying Fish: an Ode."

The central character of "Sea and Bay" is Alden Carr, who describes his youth:

I made no friends; as soon as school was done
I used to trudge off gravely by myself
To lord it in the kingdom of my choice;
A pebbly beach, walled in on every side
By scarred gray cliffs that shut the world of school
And farm completely out, yet left me free
To share the gladness of the romping waves,
And steep my being in the soft warm air.

The spirit of adventure, desire to live, a weariness of a curbed and routine life, come to Alden with his first sight of the ocean.

For when those Atlas arms of swimming blue
Reached out as if to bring heaven down to me,
I knew myself akin to that wide scene
By the great throb with which I leaped to it there
And caught it to my spirit.

Written for the main part in free verse, but ever possessing harmonious cadence, there are various breaks in Stork's general style with lines like the sea song with which the book begins:

I have lent myself to thy will, O Sea!
To the urge of thy tidal sway;
My soul to thy lure of mystery,
My cheek to thy lashing spray.
For there's never a man whose blood runs warm
But would quaff the wine of the brimming storm.
As the prodigal lends have I lent to thee,
For a day or a year and a day.

. . . . .

The shores recede, the great sails fill,

The lee rail hisses under,
As we double the cape of Lighthouse Hill
Where sea and harbor sunder.
Then here's to a season of glad unrest!
With an anchor of hope on the seaman's breast,
Till I claim once more from thy savage will
A soul that is fraught with wonder.

Mr. Stork's command of words is admirable, and his expression of life's thoughts, too often expressed tritely, with him take on new light:

No matter how or where, the crucial point
Of each man's life is when he leaves the bay,
Spreads his white sails before the ruffling breeze,
And takes the first plunge of the hollow surge.
Oh, thrill of first adventure! Overhead
Flew pearly cloudlets; on our lee the cliffs,
So formidable once, were fading low;
Beneath, the cloven waves' translucent green
Spring into spray along the dipping stem;
And somewhere out beyond those curling crests
Lay, golden as with promise, the unknown.

To revert again to the theme of "Sea and Bay"—Alden, leaving behind him the home life of the bay, visits France and Italy. He sees the false Paris but later discovers

Like a deep stream that runs through stagnant pools,
The true French people, clean and pure and strong.

And that

Art after all is just a sort of dress
For soul: sometimes too meagre, oftener though
Too rich.

Altho Carr is disappointed in his first love, when on returning home from a long trip, he learns of the betrothal of the sweetheart of his youth to his brother, he finally finds true love and builds a home in sight of both bay and sea.

Charles Wharton Stork was born on February 12, 1881, in Philadelphia and studied at Haverford, Harvard and the University of Pennsylvania. He has done much for furthering interests in modern poetry both in America and abroad as Editor of *Contemporary Verse,* a monthly magazine devoted solely to original poems. He makes his home in Philadelphia but in the summer lives in a little house far up on the New England coast which he calls "The Stork's Nest."

George Sterling

There is a certain richness of words that distinguishes the poetry of George Sterling, whose writings were first so popular upon the Pacific coast, and which in good time have found their way into the hearts of a less local American audience.

Although of almost perfect craftsmanship, Mr. Sterling's poems are inclined to cloy by sheer heaviness of splendor. An example of this is found in the name poem of his collected verse, "The House of Orchids."

And in its antic flight
Behold the vampire-bat veer off from thee
As from a phantom face,
Or watch Antares' light peer craftily
Down from the dank and moonless sky,

As goblins' eyes might gleam
Or baleful rubies glare,
Muffled in smoke or incense-laden air.
And thou, most weird companion, thou dost seem
Some mottled moth of Hell,
That stealthily might fly
To hover there above the carnal bell
Of some black lily, still and venomous,
And poise forever thus.

Sterling delights in the use of jewel-like comparisons, and many of his poems scintillate with this jeweled brilliancy. In them is color in abundance and often a touch of delicate fantasy:

Then from the maelstroms of the surf arose
With laughter, mystical, and up the sands
Came two that walked with intertwining hands
Amid those ocean snows.

Ghostly they shone before the lofty spray—
Fairer than gods and naked as the moon,
The foamy fillets at their ankles strewn
Less marble-white than they.

Laughing they stood, then to our beacon's glare
Drew nearer, as we watched in mad surprise
The scarlet-flashing lips, the sea-green eyes,
The red and tangled hair.

George Sterling was born at Sag Harbor, New York, on December 1, 1869, the son of George Ansel and Mary Parker (Havens) Sterling. He was educated in private and public schools and at St. Charles College, Ellicott City, Md.

He was married to Miss Carrie Rand, of Oakland, Cal., February 7, 1896.

Mr. Sterling's works include "The House of Orchids," "The Testimony of the Suns" and "A Wine of Wizardy."

Louis Untermeyer

In the dedication of "These Times," by Louis Untermeyer, he has written "To Robert Frost, Poet and Person." Were these too few and inadequate comments on Mr. Untermeyer's work to bear a dedication it would read, "To Louis Untermeyer, Poet and Friend of Poets"—for his talents, both as poet and critic, have fallen upon fertile soil.

Mr. Untermeyer's verses have appeared in various magazines—his books include "First Love," "Challenge—and Other Poems," "Heinrich Heine," a translation of 325 poems, "These Times" and "The New Era in American Poetry."

His poems show a broad horizon as a creator and interpreter. Of this last characteristic one needs but turn to his translations of Heine.

As a realist, note the following from "On the Palisades":

Like a blue snake uncoiled,
The lazy river, stretching between the banks,
Smoothed out its rippling folds, splotchy with sunlight,
And slept again, basking in silence.
A sea-gull chattered stridently;
We heard, breaking the rhythms of the song,
The cough of the asthmatic motor-boat
Sputtering toward the pier. . . .
And stillness again.

He declared to Beauty
You shall not lead me, Beauty—
No, on no more passionate and never-ending quests.
I am tired of stumbling after you,
Through wild, familiar forests and strange bogs;
Tired of breaking my heart following a shifting light.

Mr. Untermeyer, who is thirty-two years of age, declares that his childhood was a "school-hating" one, and his Alma Mater, the "radical" De Witt Clinton High School.

He says that as a younger man—if one may speak in such terms of thirty-two—his taste in literature was execrable. "There was even a time when I considered Alfred Noyes a great poet. My taste in music was a far different matter. At sixteen I came perilously near being a concert pianist—I can still play most of Beethoven, Brahms, and Schumann without threats from the neighbors. Started to write extremely bad essays and even worse poetry at the age of seventeen. Up to then, my life was blameless! Upon the birth of a son, I became convinced that children must be fed. My wife also seemed to require food. Whereupon, after flirting with the idea of writing songs for the concert stage, I entered the jewelry manufacturing concern of my father—of which establishment I am now designer, superintendent, and vice-president."

John Gould Fletcher

Miss Amy Lowell, who classes herself with the imagists, declares that imagism is presentation, not representation, and for example cites Mr. Fletcher's

poem, "The Calm," conforming to the imagists' idea of not speaking of the sea as "the rolling wave" or the "vasty deep" but thus:

> At noon I shall see waves flashing,
> White power of spray.
>
> The steamers, stately,
> Kick up white puffs of spray behind them.
> The boiling wake
> Merges in the blue-black mirror of the sea.

That suggestion, the implication of something rather than the statement of it which is one of the marked characteristics of imagists' verse is thus demonstrated by Mr. Fletcher in "The Well":

> The well is not used now
> Its waters are tainted.
>
> I remember there was once a man went down
> To clean it.
> He found it very cold and deep,
> With a queer niche in one of its sides,
> From which he hauled forth buckets of bricks and dirt.

At the age of eleven years, John Gould Fletcher was sent to school for the first time and then he began to write verses. In 1899 he entered high school and was graduated in 1902. Later to Philips Academy, Andover, to prepare for Harvard, which plans he abandoned and sailed to Europe in August of 1908. He has lived much abroad since and his European life rather than American is reflected in a major portion of his work.

An interesting bit of art is his "The Vowels" which he dedicated to Leon Bakst:

A light and shade, E green, I blue, U purple and yellow,
O red,
All over my soul and song your lambent variations are
spread.
A, flaming caravans of day advancing with stately art
Through pale, ashy deserts of grey to the shadowy dark
of the heart;
Barbaric clangor of cataracts, suave caresses of sails,
Caverned abysms of silence, assaults of infuriate gales;
Dappled vibrations of black and white that the bacchanal
valleys track;
Candid and waxlike jasmine, amaranth sable black.

E, parakeets of emerald shrieking perverse in the trees,
Iridescent and restless chameleons tremulous in the
breeze,
Peace on the leaves, peace on the sea-green sea,
Ethiopian timbrels that tinkle melodiously:
I, Iris of night, hyacinthine, semi-green,
Intensity of sky and of distant sea dimly seen,
Chryselephantine image, Athena violet-crowned,
Beryl-set sistra of Isis ashiver with infinite sound:
Bells with amethyst tongues, silver bells, E and I,
Tears that drip on the wires, Aeolian melody!

It was under the title "Irradiations—Sand and Spray" that Mr. Fletcher's style of writing was presented in April, 1915, here. In his preface he argues in favor of *vers libre*. He says: "The basis of English poetry is rhythm, or, as some would prefer to call it, cadence. This rhythm is obtained by mingling stressed and unstressed syllables. . . .

"I maintain that poetry is capable of as many gradations in cadence as music is in time. We can have a rapid group of syllables—what is called a line—succeeded by a slow heavy one; like the swift scurrying of the wave and the sullen dragging of itself away. Or we can gradually increase or decrease our tempo, creating accelerando and rallentando effects."

In April, 1916 came "Goblins and Pagodas" which contains his much discussed "Green Symphony."

In contrast to Mr. Robinson's picture of Lincoln, it is of interest to note the beginning of Mr. Fletcher's study of the same theme:

Like a gaunt, craggly pine
Which lifts its head above the mournful sandhills;
And patiently, through dull years of bitter silence,
Untended and uncared for, starts to grow.

Ungainly, labouring, huge,
The wind of the north has twisted and gnarled its branches;
Yet in the heat of midsummer days, when thunderclouds ring the horizon,
A nation of men shall rest beneath its shade.

John Hall Wheelock

Three books of love poems, poems of nature, redolent of the sea, and the various wonders of the stars and flowers, bear the name of John Hall Wheelock as author. In 1911 Mr. Wheelock's "The Human Fantasy" was published. Here are pictures of the city —more specifically such things as "The Italian Restaurant":

"And the canary silent on the wall
Trilled through the smoky air;
The clever bird, it never sang at all
He said, till she was there."

And "The Theater-Hour":

"At night the city's dazzling ways
Flare dizzily, like fierce and flaming suns,
A million lights all scattering at once
A garish glare abroad and desolate blaze.

The narrow cañons and the gorges deep
Cut south and north in many a lurid line,
Like the starred streets of luminous heaven shine
That from the center to the circle sweep."

A year later Mr. Wheelock brought out "The Beloved Adventure," a generous volume of verse, conspicuous for its sea poems. Typical of the best of these are:

The somber waters move where sky and cloud-line are,—
The odor of all the sea is huge within the night;
Within her spray hangs drenched the jeweled evening star.
Still the hand of twilight with darkness strokes and stills
The somber and immense breast of the swelling sea,
And the pale hand of dawn across the darkness spills
Her clear and crystal cup of radiant ecstasy—;
The white, immaculate waste of morning sobs and thrills!

His "Moon-Dawn" shows his ardent worship of the beautiful:

"O Loveliness! O Light! God! O seraphic Breath!
Radiant Supreme! For this one moment now

I thank Thee, thank Thee, thank Thee; I bless Thee
from beneath—
I thank Thee,—I cannot say—I cannot tell Thee how!
O Beauty, thou atonest for all things, even death!"

Mr. Wheelock has an almost Balzacian relish in writing about dead loves, a theme of which he apparently never tires, and his lines are filled with such descriptions.

His latest work, "Love and Liberation," contains "The Songs of Adshed of Meru and Other Poems." Here is the oriental influence upon Mr. Wheelock's writing, conspicuous among which are his lines on "Bird-Songs and Roses," which ends with the following song:

Life went forth in the strength
Of the morning from his lair—
The first young joy he found,
He seized it by the hair.

So ruthlessly your heart
Against my own I pressed,
And whirled against my own
The radiance of your breast.

But clinging about my neck
Your arms to a taming yoke
Grew, that stilled my heart;
Love within me awoke.

Then at first was I sad—,
But the old, the rebellious strength
Tore my lips apart,
Turned to a song at length!

. . . . .

Song at the source of Song
Sweet it is to confess,
And loveliness to humble
At the feet of Loveliness.

John Hall Wheelock was born at Far Rockaway, Long Island, New York, in 1886. He attended Harvard University, the University of Göttingen, and the University of Berlin. He is a conspicuous member of the Poetry Society of America, and makes his home in New York City. As a contributor to *Scribners, Harpers,* and *The Century* magazines his work has been widely circulated. His works include "The Human Fantasy," "The Beloved Adventure" and "Love and Liberation."

CHAPTER XII

CARL SANDBURG, FREDERICK MORTIMER CLAPP, DONALD EVANS, EZRA POUND, BENJAMIN DE CASSERES, ROY HELTON

Carl Sandburg

"Carl Sandburg is an observer with sympathy but without fear. . . . He puts words to the uses of bronze. His music at times is of clearest sweetness like the tinkling of blue chisels, at other times it has the appropriate harshness of resisting metal."

So Carl Sandburg is endorsed by Edgar Lee Masters for his "Chicago Poems," published in April, 1916.

A number of poems included in this certainly original volume were first printed in *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse,* Chicago, *Poetry,* and in *Reedy's Mirror.* Their creator is a man who glories in free verse, whose lines are sometimes almost primeval in their intensity but they are American to the core, and re-echo something of Whitman in both form and expression.

Sandburg's "Chicago" has much of the vim found in Whitman's lines:

Hog Butcher for the World,
Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat,

Player with Railroads and the Nation's Freight Handler;
Stormy, husky, brawling,
City of the Big Shoulders:

They tell me you are wicked and I believe them, for I have seen your painted women under the gas lamps luring the farm boys.
And they tell me you are crooked and I answer: Yes, it is true I have seen the gunman kill and go free to kill again.
And they tell me you are brutal and my reply is: On the faces of women and children I have seen the marks of wanton hunger.

Carl Sandburg was born in Galesburg, Illinois, in 1878 of Swedish parents. His mother had but two years of schooling and his father, three months. In Sweden he bore the name of August Johnson, but there were so many other August Johnsons on the pay roll of the Burlington railroad shop where he was employed as a blacksmith that the family name was changed to Sandburg.

Carl, when thirteen years old, left school to enjoy the sights of Galesburg from the seat of a milk-wagon, which position he resigned to become respectively, porter in a barber shop, scenery-mover in a theatre, driver of a truck in a brickyard kiln, and moulder of clay in a pottery shop.

The call of the West entered this youth's being at the age of seventeen. He dish-washed in Denver, worked in a construction camp, threshed wheat in Kansas, and finally returned to Galesburg to learn the painter's trade. And then war with Spain was de-

clared and Sandburg enlisted in Company C of the Sixth Illinois Volunteers, the first company to set foot on the island of Porto Rico. When mustered out, he had $100.00 in cash, the largest sum he had ever possessed in his life. He forthwith returned to Galesburg and took a course in Lombard College. At the end of his first year various of the men of his military company voted him a cadetship at West Point, where he passed 99% physically and qualified in everything but arithmetic, which was a sorry failure.

Back to Lombard he went where he earned his tuition and expense by ringing the college bell and acting as janitor in the gymnasium. Then the desire for self-expression came, and he became editor of his college monthly paper, and editor and chief writer of an annual called *The Cannibal,* and the college correspondent for a newspaper.

Galesburg at the time of Sandburg's stay was destined to produce some noteworthy men, among whom were John Finley, the educator; Frank H. Sisson, well-known in the magazine world; Ben B. Hampton and other men who have since become famous as writers, singers, and explorers.

Sandburg left college in 1907, and began the trip to Wisconsin where he spoke on street corners and at factory gates, wrote leaflets and pamphlets, and worked as a district organizer for the Social-Democratic party of Wisconsin. He also worked on various newspapers and magazines, and is at present on the editorial staff of the *Chicago Daily News.*

Sandburg declares that his "pals" are his wife and

two daughters who have cured him forever of the wanderlust.

Carl Sandburg was awarded the Helen Haire Levinson prize of $200 in 1914 by *The Poetry* magazine editorial board for the "best poem written by a citizen of the United States" and submitted to *Poetry*. The editorial board was divided two to two, and the deciding vote was cast by Hobart Chatfield-Taylor.

Sandburg's poems are generally written first in a pocket note-book "at or near some storm center downtown in the daytime." They are then rewritten at home at night. His latest work is "The Corn Huskers," published in the fall of 1918.

Whenever a Chicagoan pays tribute to the Muses of Poetry and Prose, one is always prepared for some sort of a slap at Broadway. To witness Mr. Sandburg's idea of that great avenue,—

BROADWAY

I shall never forget you, Broadway,
Your golden and calling lights.

I'll remember you long,
Tall-walled river of rush and play.

Hearts that know you hate you
And lips that have given you laughter
Have gone to their ashes of life and its roses,
Cursing the dreams that were lost
In the dust of your harsh and trampled stones.

In the following poem, however, Mr. Sandburg has brought into play all the beauty of words, of which art he is master.

In the loam we sleep,
In the cool moist loam,
To the lull of years that pass,
And the break of stars.

From the loam, then,
The soft warm loam,
We rise;
To shape of rose leaf,
Of face and shoulder,
We stand, then,

To a whiff of life
Lifted to the silver of the sun
Over and out of the loam
A day.

This poem is in "Others, An Anthology of the New Verse" edited by Alfred Kreymborg.

The section of his book devoted to his war poems is worthy of consideration among some of the most striking lines that have found their inspiration in the World War.

MURMURINGS IN A FIELD HOSPITAL

(They picked him up in the grass where he had lain two days in the rain with a piece of shrapnel in his lungs.)

Come to me only with playthings now. . . .
A picture of a singing woman with blue eyes
Standing at a fence of hollyhocks, poppies and sunflowers. . . .
Or an old man I remember sitting with children telling stories
Of days that never happened anywhere in the world. . . .

No more iron cold and real to handle,
Shaped for a drive straight ahead.
Bring me only beautiful useless things.
Only old home things touched at sunset in the quiet. . . .
And at the window one day in summer
Yellow of the new crock of butter
Stood against the red of new climbing roses. . . .
And the world was all playthings.

WARS

In the old wars drum of hoofs and the beat of shod feet.
In the new wars hum of motors and the tread of rubber tires.
In the wars to come silent wheels and whirr of rods not yet dreamed out in the heads of men.

. . . . .

In the old wars kings quarreling and thousands of men following.
In the new wars kings quarreling and millions of men following.
In the wars to come kings kicked under the dust and millions of men following great causes not yet dreamed out in the heads of men.

The poem of Sandburg's which shows how poetic form in its generalities may be disregarded and still be effective is shown in "Sheep":

Thousands of sheep, soft-footed, black-nosed sheep—one by one going up the hill and over the fence—one by one four-footed pattering up and over—one by one wiggling their stub tails as they take the short jump and go over—one by one silently unless for the multitudinous drumming of their hoofs as they move on and go over—

thousands and thousands of them in the grey haze of evening just after sundown—one by one slanting in a long line to pass over the hill—

I am the slow, long-legged Sleepyman and I love you, sheep in Persia, California, Argentine, Australia, or Spain —you are the thoughts that help me when I, the Sleepyman, lay my hands on the eyelids of the children of the world at eight o'clock every night—you thousands and thousands of sheep in a procession of dusk making an endless multitudinous drumming on the hills with your hoofs.

Frederick Mortimer Clapp

In "New York and Other Verses" Frederick Mortimer Clapp approaches the standards of writing laid down by Whitman. Certainly no poet since Whitman's day has gauged better the pulse of the city, than Mr. Clapp. The soul of the city that Ernest Poole depicts so well in "The Harbor" is found by Mr. Clapp in "New York and Other Verses"; bear witness to the titles even that he selects—"My Own City," "Warehouses," "Steam," and "Brooklyn Bridge."

Here is a poet whose use of words achieves a descriptive value found in the work of too few American poets. In his poem, "The Warehouses" he writes:

> . . . the curd-white soaps that they make in Jaffa,
> crated in cubes and inert and labelled—
> quantity, quality, weight and size;
> and a hundred thousand sacks of grain
> in which lies hidden
> a whole fierce summer's sun on Dakotan prairies—
> a hundred thousand sacks of grain
> stacked like cubes and inert and labelled.

There are floors that groan with figs of Smyrna,
and Biskran dates;
there are cumquats from the Inland Sea,
crated and stacked and inert and labelled;
there are stiffened hides of a race of cattle
that hardly a year ago
filled the skies with the dust of their trampling
on Argentine plateaux,
bale upon bale and inert and labelled.

Frederick Mortimer Clapp was born in New York City on July 26, 1879. He prepared under a private tutor and entered the College of the City of New York in January of the Sophomore year. He was awarded two year honors in English, and secured the Larned Fellowship and was a member of Phi Gamma Delta before entering Yale. He was married to Miss Maud Caroline Ede, author of that remarkable book, "A Green Tent in Flanders," one of the most artistic achievements to come out of the World War.

Mr. Clapp's publications include: "On Certain Drawings of Pontormo," "Les Dessins de Pontormo," "Il ritratto d' Allessandro de'Medici nella raccolta Johnson," "On the Overland," "On the Overland and Other Poems," "Jacopo Carucci de Pontormo, His Life and Work," and "New York and Other Poems."

Mr. Clapp is now serving in France as a Lieutenant in the 22nd Aero Squadron, American Expeditionary Forces.

Donald Evans

"Sonnets from the Patagonian" was the opening gun in the Modernists' war against accepted literary tradi-

tions and Donald Evans, the author, became a veritable target for the critics. There was much damning and some praise. To the orthodox he was a mad man, "a futurist charlatan," "an insincere poseur," "a monster of salacity"; to the liberal he opened up a new vista with his satires on sex and sanity, which only now are beginning to be really understood. Such lines as

> For I had bitten sharp kiss after kiss
> Devoutly, till her sleek young body bled.
>
> . . . . .
>
> Then Carlo came; he shone like a new sin.

certainly were destined to stir up a Puritanical ripple among those accustomed to traditional ways. As for "In the Vices," these lines brought upon his head the accusation of sheer vulgarity.

In a little booklet on "The Art of Donald Evans" Mr. Hollis calls him "the comedian of modern verse, a curiously vivid figure, never commonplace." It was not, however, until Mr. Evans' second book of verse, "Sonnets From the Patagonian," was published in 1914 that he became generally known to modern poetry readers. In six weeks' time, every line of his book had been quoted in different reviews. Here were novel phonetics, strange new values and harmonies. Donald Evans is, however, entitled to the laurels of the pioneer and for such lines as these in "Extreme Unction" due value must be given him:

> Across the rotting pads in the lily lake
> Her gesture floated toward the iris bed,
> Wrapped in a whispered perfume of the dead,
> And her gaze followed slowly in its wake.

Now was the summons come, she must obey,
For Beauty pleaded from the charnel house,
For violet nights and violent carouse
To free her from the cerements of decay.

Crapulous hands reach out to strangle thee,
And every moment is a winding-sheet,
With bats to chant corruption's litany.
Be thou a torch to flash fanfaronade,
And as the earth crumbles beneath thy feet
Flaunt thou the glitter of a new brocade!

"Her Smile" presents a very different study:

Her hidden smile was full of little breasts,
And with her two white hands she stroked her fears,
The while the serpent peered at her arched ears,
And night's grim hours stalked in, unbidden guests.
A noise was in her eyes that sang of scorn,
And round her voice there gleamed a nameless dread,
As though her lips were hungry for the dead,
Yet knew the food of dawn would be forlorn.

The cold hours ebbed, and still she held her throne;
Across the sky the lightning made mad play,
And then the scarlet screams stood forth revealed.
She turned her back, and grasped a monotone;
It answered all; she lived again that day
She triumphed in the tragic turnip field.

Donald Evans was born in Philadelphia in 1884, was educated at Haverford College and under tutors in England. He took up newspaper writing in 1905 and continued in this work until 1917, producing the following books in the meanwhile:

"Discords," "Two Deaths In the Bronx," "Nine Poems From a Valetudinarium" and "Sonnets From the Patagonian."

Donald Evans was married to Leah Winslow in 1907. His second marriage, to Esther Porter, was in 1918.

Upon our declaration of war in May, 1917, he enlisted in the army concerning which he wrote the following to his friend, Cornwall Hollis:

"Before you have seen my book through the press I may be dead. With all my heart I hope I shall not come back, for then impersonally I shall have fallen for a cause in which I have no faith. What more distinguished end for an incurable poseur? Have I not been called that? Plant, I beg you, migonette to encircle my arrowroot fields."

Ezra Pound

"All talk on modern poetry, by people who know," wrote Carl Sandburg in *Poetry*, "ends with dragging in Ezra Pound somewhere. He may be named only to be cursed as wanton and mocker, poseur, trifler and vagrant. Or he may be classed as filling a niche today like that of Keats in a preceding epoch. The point is, he will be mentioned."

This is Ezra Pound in a nutshell. Critics have found him primarily a scholar, a translator, declared that his early work was beautiful or that his latter work was indicative of little but cheap advertisement. Then there has been that following who have found in him a leader of untrammelled thought and poetic

expression, a sincere poet and not a fantastic, erratic poseur.

Ezra Pound's first book was published in Venice just before he took up his residence in London in 1908. "A Lume Spento" was its title, and of it a Venetian critic wrote: "Wild and haunting stuff, absolutely poetic, original, imaginative, passionate, and spiritual. Those who do not consider it crazy may well consider it inspired. Coming after the trite and decorous verse of most of our decorous poets, this poet seems like a minstrel of Provence at a suburban musical evening. . . . The unseizable magic of poetry is in the queer paper volume, and words are no good in describing it."

From Venice Mr. Pound went to London with his little book, and here an English edition was brought out by Mr. Elkin Mathews. In a little book called "Ezra Pound: His Metric and Poetry," published by Alfred A. Knopf, the following lines are of particular interest:

"Ezra Pound has been fathered with *vers libre* in English, with all its vices and virtues. The term is a loose one—any verse is called 'free' by people whose ears are not accustomed to it—in the second place, Pound's use of this medium has shown the temperance of the artist, and his belief in it as a vehicle is not that of the fanatic. He has said himself that when one has the proper material for a sonnet, one should use the sonnet form; but that it happens very rarely to any poet to find himself in possession of just the block of stuff which can perfectly be modelled into the sonnet. It is true that up to very recently it was impos-

sible to get free verse printed in any periodical except those in which Pound had influence, and that now it is possible to print free verse (second, third, or tenth rate) in almost any American magazine. Who is responsible for the bad free verse is a question of no importance, inasmuch as its authors would have written bad verse in any form; Pound has at least the right to be judged by the success or failure of his own. Pound's *vers libre* is such as is only possible for a poet who has worked tirelessly with rigid forms and different systems of metric. His 'Canzoni' are in a way aside from his direct line of progress; they are much more nearly studies in mediæval appreciation than any of his other verse, but they are interesting, apart from their merit, as showing the poet at work with the most intricate Provençal forms—so intricate that the pattern cannot be exhibited without quoting an entire poem. (M. Jean de Bosschere, whose French is translated in the 'Egoist,' has already called attention to the fact that Pound was the first writer in English to use five Provençal forms.) Quotation will show, however, the great variety of rhythm which Pound manages to introduce into the ordinary iambic pentameter:

"Thy gracious ways,
O lady of my heart, have
O'er all my thought their golden glamour cast;
As amber torch-flames, where strange men-at-arms,
Tread softly 'neath the damask shield of night,
Rise from the flowing steel in part reflected,
So on my mailèd thought that with thee goeth,
Though dark the way, a golden glamour falleth.

Following the publication of Ezra Pound's first book came others, including the following titles:

"Provenca," "The Spirit of Romance," "The Sonnets and Ballads of Guido Cavalcanti," "Ripostes," "Des Imagistes," "Gaudier-Brzeska," "Noh," "Lustra," and "Pavannes and Divisions."

Mr. Pound was born in Hailey, Idaho, October 30, 1885, and was educated in the University of Pennsylvania and Hamilton College. While Mr. Pound makes his home abroad, he is a steady contributor both in capacity of editor and writer for *The Little Review,* "a magazine of the arts making no compromise with the public's tastes." He makes his home in Holland Place Chambers, Kensington, London, England.

Benjamin De Casseres

The *New York World Magazine* at one time printed an article by Henry Tyrell with the heading something like this: "Poems of a Shadow-Eater—De Casseres, Psalmist of Night and Nietzscheism, Lives Unknown in New York and Writes Like Poe, Whitman, Baudelaire and King David, While Railing at the Metropolis as 'A City Whose Splendor Is in the Dazzling Glitter of All That Is Monstrous and Soulless.'" And this is an excellent approach to the work of Benjamin De Casseres. His much commented upon "De Profundis" runs:

Night! Night! Eternal Night, whose black vapors have
filled all the sluice-ways of
Time—Night, pageless and void;

Night upgurgling from chaos, upswirl of the noumenal
seas, drape me and veil me from the illusory light of
this world!
My being's at nadir,
I pass into my solstice,
I have touched of ITS garment, the black thing IT
weaves on ITS sentient looms,
While we crawl in ITS creases and guess.
Sit I in the night of ITS sleeve,
Withering into eternities,
Bowed in ITS night, in ITS might!

Benjamin de Casseres was born in Philadelphia, forty years ago, of Spanish-Hebrew parents, through whom he traces his lineal descent from the 17th century Jewish philosopher, Spinoza. Not Spinoza, however, but Nietzsche is his psychic godfather, and, needless to say, Benjamin de Casseres is a born radical. He is a master of many languages, and a deep student of art, specializing on the archæological remains of the ancient Aztecs.

Roy Helton

Time will decide whether or not Roy Helton will share honors with Edgar Lee Masters. Much of the quality found in the latter's poems is evidenced in Helton's book, "Outcasts in Beulah Land," published in the fall of 1918. This book, which is his first, offers poems of rare genius, for here is a man who can touch with magic understanding the homely things of life. He sees the ten-cent store and the automat lunch-room and similar themes in terms which the average poet might shun.

To quote from Helton is difficult, but the following lines from "Mazie" present a meagre example of his ability:

Lonely-eyed Mazie sat
In the old Automat,
Dreaming, ah, dreaming a
Dream of some golden day;
Dreaming, ah, dreaming
Strange dreams never told
By the shy hidden-hearted
  Dear ladies of old.

. . . . .
Nobody found her.

Gentle-eyed Mazie who
Wanted a hero too.

But at the last, I saw
Nature assert the sway
Of her relentless law:
Mazie's shy star arose
In new-caught glory:
Day's end and stars and tide,
Love for the weary-eyed,
These the grave god supplied
  To her mild story.

Eating his ham and eggs
Over a cup of tea,
Scanning the ladies' legs
Under the tables; he
Sidled across to her
Grimly and grimly;
Sidled across, as though
He were a pirate, out

Of Treasure Island, who
Had a new lay in mind
For wholesale murder: grim
Wasn't the name for him:
Growled out a greeting.

That was their meeting;
Her part all wonder
At gold band and blue.
His part? I puzzled, till
Somehow—God knows—
The hidden child
Rose from his war-beaten
Eyes, and he smiled. . . .

CHAPTER XIII

KATHARINE LEE BATES, HARRIET MONROE, JESSIE RITTENHOUSE, SARAH CLEGHORN, ALICE BROWN, ANNA HEMPSTEAD BRANCH, JOSEPHINE PRESTON PEABODY, OLIVE TILFORD DARGAN

Katharine Lee Bates

"As a child in what was then the little seafaring village of Falmouth, Mass., twenty miles from a railroad, I found myself reading poetry with joy," writes Katharine Lee Bates, "and very soon, child-fashion, making verses of my own. Early in my sophomore year at Wellesley College I was surprised and delighted to have a poem of mine accepted by *The Atlantic Monthly,* and ever since have been looking forward to a period in life when I shall be free to devote the best of my strength and the most of my time to poetry. That period has never come, as I have been all my years a very busy teacher, doing a good deal of incidental writing, as studies on special subjects,—for example, American Literature and the English Religious Drama,—and editions of English Classics. But I am still expecting, and shall continue to expect until I reach the Amaranth Meadows, a holiday all my own on Parnassus."

W. S. B., writing in the *Boston Transcript,* pays a most admirable tribute to Miss Bates:

"By a strange paradox the most satisfying war poetry in America has been written by women. Josephine Preston Peabody's 'Harvest-Moon,' published some time ago, is one of the most spiritually illuminating volumes on the war; Miss Lowell has done better than any man, some of her pieces being charged with indignant wrath and the persuasive eloquence of patriotism; Miss Burr's 'Silver Trumpet' is blown through with the ecstatic celebration of the Great Cause, giving voice to the common anguish of the trampled nations, and to the common sentiments of the multitudes in the great democracies for the liberty and peace of the world; and Miss Bates, in 'The Retinue and Other Poems,' has touched with tenderness and with a fine idealism the spirit of the Allied peoples into expression from 'consternation at the horror of war itself to recognition of the supreme issues involved.'"

In the "New Crusade," Miss Bates writes:

Life is a trifle;
Honor is all;
Shoulder the rifle;
Answer the call.
"A nation of traders"!
We'll show what we are,
Freedom's crusaders
Who war against war.

. . . . .

Life is but passion,
Sunshine on dew.
Forward to fashion
The old world anew!

"A nation of traders"!
We'll show what we are,
Freedom's crusaders
Who war against war.

And in "New Roads":

Far road for words that rush,
Arrowing space,
Swifter than meteors flush
Star-road in race.
Wireless! Tireless, leaping the wave!
Roger Bacon laughs in his grave.

One road, o'er-steep to climb
Since world began,
Winged in our wonder-time,
Sun-road for man.
Air-ship! Fair ship, soaring the blue!
Galilee had burned for you.

Dread road for Freedom's sons,
Sworn to release
Life from the threat of guns,
Red road to peace.
New knights! true knights! gleam of God's blade!
Lincoln leads in the Last Crusade.

Katharine Lee Bates was born in Falmouth, Mass., on August 12, 1859. Her works include: "College Beautiful and Other Poems," "Rose and Thorn," "Sunshine and Other Verses for Children," "Hermit Island," "English Religious Drama," "American Literature," "Spanish Highways and By-ways," "From

Gretna Green to Land's End," "The Story of Chaucer's Canterbury Pilgrims Re-told for Children," "America the Beautiful and Other Poems," "In Sunny Spain," "The Retinue and Other Poems."

Harriet Monroe

One of the most important factors in contemporary American poetry is Harriet Monroe, for as founder and editor of *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse,* she has done much to foster the spirit so necessary in young poets, which thrives upon seeing their efforts in print.

Aside from her editorial duties Miss Monroe counts to her credit, "Valeria and Other Poems," "The Columbian Ode," "John Wellborn Root—a Memoir," "The Passing Show," and "You and I." In 1917, together with Alice Corbin Henderson, Miss Monroe edited "The New Poetry, An Anthology," one of the most valuable books of its kind.

In "Love Song," Miss Monroe shows her own ability as a poet:

I love my life, but not too well
  To give it to thee like a flower,
So it may pleasure thee to dwell
  Deep in its perfume but an hour.
I love my life, but not too well.

I love my life, but not too well
  To sing it note by note away,
So to thy soul the song may tell
  The beauty of the desolate day.
I love my life, but not too well.

I love my life but not too well
To cast it like a cloak on thine,
Against the storms that sound and swell
Between thy lonely heart and mine.
I love my life, but not too well.

Miss Monroe was born in Chicago. She was graduated from the Visitation Academy, Georgetown, D. C., in 1891, and invited by the Committee on Ceremonies of the Chicago Exposition to write the dedicatory poem for its opening. Her "Columbian Ode" was sung and read at the ceremonies of dedication celebrating the 400th anniversary of the discovery of America, October 21, 1892.

Jessie B. Rittenhouse

For the past twenty years Jessie B. Rittenhouse has devoted her life to the criticism of modern poetry, to the various movements looking to the advancement of poetic appreciation in America. She was the first to enter this field, and to insist that in the poets of the nineties, who were at the fore when she begun, we had the finest group, Whitman, Poe, and Emerson excluded, that America had produced.

As a pioneer in the poetry movement, Miss Rittenhouse published in 1904 "The Younger American Poets," a volume of criticism devoted to the work of the poets of the nineties, and, in retrospection, it is of interest to note that this book had to create its field, as no subject was at that time so completely discredited as poetry. It not only made its field, but turned the first furrow for what has followed. It is in use at

the Sorbonne, the University of Tokio, the college at the Hague, and other foreign institutions, as well as in most of our own colleges.

Following its publication, Miss Rittenhouse came to New York and during the next ten years did most of the criticism of poetry for *The New York Times Review of Books,* and various other newspapers and periodicals, lectured in universities and before clubs on poetry, and occupied the office of Secretary of the Poetry Society of America.

While Miss Rittenhouse has been so busily engaged proselyting for our American poets, her poetic muse has had little chance to express itself in creative work, but during 1917 and 1918 Miss Rittenhouse wrote those delightful poems which make up "The Door of Dreams."

Such stanzas as the following, for example, best show the quality of Miss Rittenhouse's work:

THE HOUR

You loved me for an hour
  Of all your careless days
And then you went forgetting
  Down your old ways.

How could you know that Time would work
  A magic deed for me
And fix that single hour
  For my eternity!

Another example for those who admire simplicity, expression unlabored, and yet perfect in form:

THE GHOST

A score of years you had been lying
In this spot,
Yet I, to whom you were the dearest,
Had seen it not.

And when today, by time emboldened,
I looked upon the stone,
'Twas not your ghost that stood beside me,
But my own.

While one is apt to consider Miss Rittenhouse merely in the light of a critic, no book such as this is designed to be would be complete without proper tribute paid to one who must be valued for her poetry as well as her critiques. For "The Door of Dreams," small book though it is, shows real lovers of poetry just how able are the talents that Miss Rittenhouse possesses along creative lines. There are no false notes in her writings. Here is construction that patterns on the best principles of poetry. And not a few of the poems show kinship to the writings of Sara Teasdale.

"Songs to One Passing," a series of four poems, offers the following noteworthy quotation:

Your wistful eyes that day you left,
They haunt me all the night.
I never saw in any eyes
So mystical a light.

I knew the day you went from me
That you would come no more,
And yet I said the casual words
That I had said before.

If only then I had been true
And held you in my arms,
And shielded you a moment's space
From death's alarms!

Sarah Cleghorn

"I was always beguiled with a notion of writing verses, and perhaps unfortunately never received much of the wholesome ridicule from my relations which might have cured me of trying," says Sarah Cleghorn.

Her own story told in her own way runs something like this: "I believe that when I was growing up (from 1885 to 1895—well, to 1905, perhaps, when I was almost thirty) poetry in this country was at as low an ebb of beauty, originality and force as ever it was in its life. My sunbonnet sort of verses, describing old-timey people and places, with as much of the charm such subjects always had for me, as I could get into my pen, had for several years a fair sale in a number of well-known magazines. And I am afraid that is proof of poetry being very anæmic in this country at that time. Mr. Bliss Perry, at that time editor of *The Atlantic,* once wrote me a most kind letter advising me to try to go outside this old-timey field. I did go a little outside it, and managed to express some of my accumulated indignation at various social wrongs. Magazines were still muck-raking, and I still had a fair sale. I had also a sale of sorts for some of the ideas a little practice of the art of contemplation had given me. The war then began, and, if you remember, the first feeling in this country was revolt against the idea of war. I shared it to a degree that hardened

into settled pacifism, at about the time when the thought of my countrymen began to turn to preparedness. Some of my pacifist verses were applauded and reprinted by papers which a year or so later abhorred the very idea of them. This of course means that such verses as rise to my mind and heart nowadays could not find a hole anywhere to creep into print through, were they written with far more wit and melody than I possess.

"But meantime, from about the time when I ceased to write sunbonnet verses, the sky of poetry began to be lighted with real stars. The authentic fire was burning again. John Masefield had begun to write the great poetry that will ennoble our times forever. Those of us who had tended our little sparks of lighted straw read his 'Everlasting Mercy,' 'Dauber,' and 'Widow,' and realized that he is a poet of the same immortal splendor as Milton—greater than Browning and immeasurably greater than any other poet now alive who writes in English. His sombre and penetrating thought in the 'Sonnets' is like the deep thought of Meredith; his descriptions of the sea can only be compared with the 'Ancient Mariner'; and his burning feeling for human values, his extreme tenderness and his religious intensity exceed everything I ever read in any poet except 'Piers Plowman.' No one writing poetry in English now sustains thought or feeling in any way comparable to him.

"Of course this is a personal opinion merely, and that of a mere lover of poetry whose reputation as a judge of it has yet to be made. I find few indeed who agree with me.

"But when I can forget Masefield's (as I think) overpowering greatness, I find a large body of other poetry which seems to me immeasurably in advance of what used to be written fifteen or twenty-five years ago. First of all poets in this country, as it seems to me, is Robert Frost. I don't think it is altogether because I am a New Englander that I find his Puritan strength and restrained fire so splendid. The first time I saw his poetry practically finished any idea I might have had that I could write verses worth reading. His masterpiece—'The Death of the Hired Man,' 'The Self Seeker,' the prize poem called 'Snow,' and half a dozen others just barely less powerful and beautiful, give me more delight than anything else of American poets I ever read. Nothing I've ever read (or heard the author read) by Vachel Lindsay seems to me so fine as his great poem, 'General William Booth Enters Into Heaven.' Of all the numbers of Harriet Monroe's magazine *Poetry* which I have seen, the one containing that poem seems to me the best number by far. Of course, 'The Congo' and 'The Chinese Nightingale' are wonderful, conceived in a burst of genius:—I don't see how they can ever be forgotten,—but I feel that they are diffuse. Lincoln Colcord wrote one or two great poems which I have seen and which reverberate in my mind. But I think I should place next to Mr. Frost, in my own mind, Edgar Lee Masters. Some of the epitaphs in the 'Spoon River Anthology,' I think memorably beautiful, as beautiful as the conception of the whole is bold and bizarre.

"Well, there it is, perhaps; the notion of modern

American poetry which I have is that it is splendidly bold, individual and inquisitive. It recognizes no 'field' for poetry. 'The field is the world.' I tried to sum it up in a piece of verse some years ago, which I enclose.

"Its influence and future. I feel rather in a receptive mood as regards those questions. I hope it will have an influence, in time, something like the influence of Jane Addams—gentle, fearless, immeasurably open to ideas, humane to the inmost core, full of the spirit of that saying of Froude's, 'But the heart must often correct the follies of the head.'

"Perhaps it will seem a whimsical notion if I say that it has a great field in some day trying to interpret animal psychology—and in so doing, gentling the world in its rawest, most brutal spot.

"And I have a dream of it, too, so painting the future co-operative earth that they help to bring it to pass.

"I love free verse no better than rhymed, but I think it is more candid."

Miss Cleghorn is a descendant of Scotch and New England parents. She has lived almost all of her life in the village of Manchester, Vermont, which her ancestors helped to settle. She has travelled in Italy, England, and Scotland. She studied at Radcliffe in 1895-06, and her verses have been published in a small book called "Portraits and Protests."

In a study of our American poets it is of interest to note Miss Cleghorn's lines from "My Muse Among the Young Poets":

I said to my faded old Muse,
"What means this hectic color in your cheek?
Why do you wear that Liberty cap?
And what are you looking down the road to see?"

My Muse did not answer.
It seemed that she was not listening.
There was a rout of young poets coming, singing and shouting up the road.
She called out to them,
"O let me hear you with a hundred ears!
Throw off that old corset of rhyme!
Toss to the winds that old delicate finicking vocabulary!"
"What, what, my Muse?—what are you saying?"
"Take the whole brawny and beautiful English language,
And all its irregular colors and harmonies
To paint nude the meanings of our time.
Paint imbecile war, embruted labor,—
The confused glorious passion for togetherness,—
Art still-born in the purlieus of poverty,
And art triumphant, militant and fearless;—
Paint the whole rape of manhood by wealth the lecher;
Paint the escape and defiance of manhood to wealth!
Paint naked our crimes against animals,
And our sweating fight for the hindmost."
"Hush, Muse, back to the desk, and write salable verses on autumn winds and Italian gardens."
Neither then did she hear me: but she went on,
"Let who will, envy and long
For the unborn poets of the Commonwealth,
With their far more lucid beauty and clearer fire.
Dearer to me are you, my own poets,
Shouting freedom and fury!
My heart would burst
If I should ever rejoice more than now I rejoice in you."

"My Muse, how comely you look, and how youthful, all
of a sudden!"
"Thank God that I ever was born!"

Alice Brown

Poems, plays and stories, all of distinctive merit, have come from Alice Brown. Born at Hampton Falls, New Hampshire, December 5, 1857, and graduated from the Robinson Seminary at Exeter, N. H., in 1876, Miss Brown was not long in making her genius felt not only in New England but throughout the entire country. With simple words she sets down such gems of verse as "Revelation":

Down in the meadow, sprent with dew,
I saw the Very God
Look from a flower's limpid blue,
Child of a starveling sod.

As for the descriptive poetry of Miss Brown, it would be difficult to surpass these lines from "Morning in Camp":

Above spice-budded tops of fringing firs,
The shimmering birches, delicate ministers
To eye's delight, and o'er the deepening rose
Of the still lake, a soundless shade she goes.
What shall withstand her? Not the mountain wall
Where the first potencies of dawning fall,
Touching and moulding till awakes a flower,
A jewelled heart of light, a throne of power.
Not all the barriers of rock and stream;
For who hath caught the swift, evanished gleam

Of Beauty's mantle hath the charmèd eye
Fated to follow wheresoe'er she fly.
O happy soul! led only by the voice
That bids her turn to some more wondrous choice!
Upon the herby field she sets her foot;
Staying, she listens there to creeping root;
Blesses the opening bud, and smells the mould,
Sinks in a fern-bed where faint coils, unrolled,
Etch on the air a curving tracery
None but the morning's postulant may see.
She steals great gospels from a sphere of dew,
That little globe where ancient lore lies new;
And while her tenderest fibres wake and stir,
The realm o'er which she reigns reconquers her.
Prostrate she falls in worship high and lone;
She swoons with rapture by the altar-stone.
God and the world,—they are the dual Great,
And through her dust are they communicate.

Miss Brown makes her home in Boston. Her works include the following titles:

"Fools of Nature," "Meadow-Grass," "By Oak and Thorn," "Life of Mercy Otis Warren," "The Road to Castaly," "The Day of His Youth," "Robert Louis Stevenson," "Tiverton Tales," "King's End," "Margaret Warrener," "The Mannerings," "High Noon," "Paradise," "The County Road," "The Court of Love," "Rose MacLeod," "The Story of Thyrza," "Country Neighbors," "John Winterbourne's Family," "The One-Footed Fairy," "The Secret of the Clan," "Vanishing Points," "Robin Hood's Barn," "My Love and I," "Children of Earth," "The Prisoner," and "Bromley Neighborhood."

Anna Hempstead Branch

Anna Hempstead Branch was awarded the first of *The Century* prizes to be given college graduates in a best poem contest. The title of this prize-winning poem was "The Road 'Twixt Heaven and Hell," which gave Miss Branch a place earned by merit among American poets.

In "The Masque of Poets," edited by Edward J. O'Brien, Miss Branch's contribution was "The Name," which concludes with these stirring lines:

Love, by this Name I sing, and breathe
A fresh, mysterious air.
By this I innocently wreathe
New garlands for my hair.

By this Name I am born anew
More beautiful, more bright.
More roseate than angelic dew,
Apparelled in delight.

I'll sing and stitch and make the bread
In the wonder of my Name,
And sun the linen for the bed
And tend the fireside flame.

By this Name do I answer yes—
Word beautiful and true.
By this I'll sew the bridal dress
I shall put on for you.

Anna Hempstead Branch was born at New London, Connecticut, and is a graduate of Adelphi Academy of Brooklyn, Smith College and the American Academy of Dramatic Art.

Miss Branch's works include "The Heart of the Road," "The Shoes That Danced," "Nimrod and Other Poems," and "Rose of the Wind," a play produced in Carnegie Lyceum in 1907.

Josephine Preston Peabody

"The Piper" is another prize-winning piece of writing, for with this play Josephine Preston Peabody obtained the Stratford-on-Avon prize in 1910. It was produced in England and a year later in America.

Among the shorter poems of this poet is "A Song of Solomon," selected by Miss Monroe for "The New Poetry, An Anthology."

King Solomon was the wisest man
  Of all that have been kings.
He built an House unto the Lord;
  And he sang of creeping things.

Of creeping things, of things that fly
  Or swim within the seas;
Of the little weed along the wall,
  And of the cedar-trees.

And happier he, without mistake,
  Than all men since alive.
God's House he built; and he did make
  A thousand songs and five.

Josephine Preston Peabody was born in New York. She was married to Lionel Simeon Marks in June, 1906. Her home is at Cambridge, Mass.

Her writings include "Old Greek Folk-Stories,"

"The Wayfarers," "Fortune and Men's Eyes," "Marlowe," "The Singing Leaves," "Pan, a Choric Idyl," "The Wings," "The Book of the Little Past," "The Piper," "The Singing Man," "The Wolf of Gubbio," and "Harvest Moon."

Olive Tilford Dargan

Olive Tilford Dargan was born in Grayson County, Kentucky. She taught school in Arkansas, Mexico, Texas and Canada until her marriage to Pegram Dargan.

In 1916 she was awarded the $500 prize by the Southern Society of New York for the best book by a Southern writer.

Contributor to numerous magazines, Mrs. Dargan has won a large following. "Fatherland" was her share to Edward J. O'Brien's "The Masque of Poets."

Come fingered as a friend, O Death!
Unfrock me, flesh and bone;
These frills of smile and moan,
These laces, traces, all unpin;
These veins that net me in,
This ever lassoing breath,
Remove from me,
If here is aught to free!

To know these hills nor wait for feet!
O Earth, to be thy child at last!
Thy roads all mine, and no white gate
Inevitably fast!

To enter where thy banquets are
When storms are called to feast;

And find thy hidden pantry stair
When Spring with thee would guest;
Into thine attic windows step
From humbled Himalays,
And round thy starry cornice creep
Waylaying deities;

Though for my hand
Space hold out spheres like roses, and
Like country lanes her orbits blow—
My Earth, I know,
If thou be green and blossom still,
That I must downward go;
Leave stars to keep
House as they will;
The winds to walk or turn and sleep,
Seas to spare or kill;
Behind my back shall sunsets burn
Bereft of my concern;
Each wonder passed
Shall feed my haste,
Till I have paused, as now,
Beneath a bending orchard bough,—
An April apple-bough,
Where southern waters creep.

Mrs. Dargan is the author of "Semiramis and Other Plays," "Lords and Lovers," "The Mortal Gods and Other Dramas," "The Cycle's Rim," and "Path Flower," adjudged by some critics to be her best book of verse.

CHAPTER XIV

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY, EDGAR GUEST, BERTON BRALEY, THOMAS A. DALY, ANTHONY EUWER, CHARLES HANSON TOWNE, JOHN CURTIS UNDERWOOD, ELLA WHEELER WILCOX, ARTHUR GUITERMAN

Christopher Morley

Perhaps you have seen this graceful and unusual little poem. It has been reprinted in numerous newspapers and magazines throughout the country:

A CHARM

O wood, burn bright; O flame, be quick;
O smoke, draw cleanly up the flue—
My lady chose your every brick
And sets her dearest hopes on you!

Logs cannot burn, nor tea be sweet,
Nor white bread turn to crispy toast,
Until your charm be made complete
By love, to lay the sooty ghost.

And then, dear books, dear waiting chairs,
Dear china and mahogany,
Draw close, for on the happy stairs
My brown-eyed girl comes down for tea!

It is dedicated "for our new fireplace, to stop its smoking," and was one of a popular volume of poems which made up "Songs for a Little House," by Christopher Morley, who before this publication had gained something of a name for himself with his book-reading-propaganda novelette, "Parnassus on Wheels."

In "Songs for a Little House" some critics found Morley inclined toward the sentimental, but generally it was accorded a warm welcome as a volume of merit and promise of finer things to come.

Concerning Christopher Morley, the following statistics, statistical and otherwise, are set down by Morley himself:

"Born May 5, 1890, at Haverford, Pa. My father is a mathematician and a poet, my mother is a musician and a fine cook and a poet, so you see I was handicapped by intellectual society and good nourishment. I have always yearned to be a poet, but will never get anywhere because I fall into the happy slough of mediocrity. I can't write either badly enough or well enough to dull the abhorred shears. My chief trouble is that I am too well fed. Great literature proceeds from an empty stomach.

"Most of my boyhood was spent in miscellaneous deviltry in Baltimore, ringing doorbells and putting out purses on the pavement with strings to them. Most of the money I see still has a string tied to it, and some one else has hold of the string. I never thought of cudgelling the muse until I went to college at Haverford, which is just a mile from Bryn Mawr. Enough said. The nymphs of Bryn Mawr are responsible for more juvenile verse in eastern Pennsylvania than the

statisticians dream. When I was eighteen I had an idea that if I could only write a poem a day for twenty years, the world would be made safe for Helicon.

"I graduated from Haverford in 1910, and a benevolent posse of college presidents in Maryland sent me to New College, Oxford, as a Rhodes Scholar.

"At Oxford I learned to drink shandygaff.

"I came home from England in 1913 and started work for Doubleday, Page & Company. At Garden City I learned to read Conrad and McFee.

"In 1917 I joined the editorial staff of *The Ladies' Home Journal,* and spent a year in studying the literary technique of Grace S. Richmond. My most exciting adventures during this period were reading a few million jokes sent in by readers of *The L. H. J.* for the famous 'That Reminds Me' page.

"In 1918 Mr. Bok decided that I would not make a good vestryman for *The L. H. J.,* and I became a millstone on the neck of *The Philadelphia Evening Public Ledger.*

"I wrote a poem in 1918, and I intend to write one in 1919.

"I was married in 1914, and live at Wyncote, Pa., ten miles from Philadelphia on the Cinder and Bloodshot. Commutation, $6.88 per month."

Commenting on Mr. Morley's second book of verse, published in 1919, "Lon Macduff," a *nom de guerre* for the facile Burton Rascoe, writes the following:

"The Rocking Horse," [Doran], Christopher Morley's new book of jingles, is mentionable only by reason of the edifying humility of the accurate title. When Mr. Morley asks,

'Why is my muse so weak of wing,
My bag of rhymes so light?'

there reëchoes in my ear my boxing instructor's reply when I asked him why my left jab always failed to reach his ribs: 'You haven't got the nut, bo; you haven't got the nut.'

"But now I shouldn't like to suggest that Mr. Morley is mentally unqualified to write poetry. Rather would I hint that so long as he soaks his temperament with the treacle of homely sentiment and mistakes his tin whistle for a lyre or for a mandolute, it were better that he leave his printed mush unclipped from the files of that newspaper column to which he signs the incredible pseudonym 'Socrates.'"

Edgar Guest

There is nothing pretentious about the writings of Edgar Guest, but he handles so ably themes of everyday that he has been rightly called "the poet of the people."

There are smiles and tears in his poems set down in the terms that are easily understood. They are genuine and portray the poet's faith in human nature.

Guest is a newspaper poet. R. Marshall, an old-time newspaper man of Detroit, writes of him:

"One bleak winter morning back in 1894, a thirteen-year-old boy walked into a Detroit drug store where he said that he could shine soda-water glasses to such a polished state of brilliance that the customers would have to wear yellow goggles, thus making one department of the business feed another department. This lad was Edgar A. Guest.

"Every night after school Eddie attacked that soda fountain with such fervor that by supper time it shone like a fire-engine. It was only a question of time when such fine enthusiasm would attract attention outside of the business organization that profited by it. So when Dave Robbins, who ran a rival store down on Third Avenue, offered Eddie a position that carried a more princely hire, Eddie resigned his old job and waited upon trade at the Robbins store.

"One of the customers of the Robbins fountain was a bookkeeper in the employ of *The Detroit Free Press*. To him the youthful Guest confided his ambition to be a reporter, and so, in the summer of 1895, when they needed a boy in the business department of the paper, the bookkeeper pulled the wires and Eddie got the job.

"William E. Quinby, lately returned to the editorial chair from his ministerial duties at The Hague, took an interest in the new office boy, and when a vacancy occurred on 'the local staff,' Eddie was made a reporter and started his career behind the scenes of the city's life. In course of time he was transferred temporarily to the exchange desk—and there's another joy that most of us in the workaday world shall never know and can never appreciate.

"Eddie read exchanges and clipped and pasted many a printed column to be grabbed frantically by the profane foreman of the composing room to plug a hole on page six when the town's foremost haberdasher fell down in his laudable intention to come through with double-column advertising copy instead of single.

"And it was in this stuffy, littered little room one

day that a poetry microbe wriggled out from between one of Marse Henry Watterson's virile editorials and bit Eddie Guest good and proper. Eddie started to write verse and more verse, and those that got into print were read and were then cut out and preserved in family albums.

"At odd times, between fire alarms, Eddie wrote verse and shortly started publishing it once a week in a column under the heading 'Chaff.' When he felt epigrammatical he wrote paragraphs—those bits of wit, humor, and pathos that the editor runs after his editorials, as a sort of goal toward which the reader will plod through the dreary waste of wisdom-laden words. These he headed 'Homely and Home Made.' A little later, his column of verse became a regular weekly feature, appearing every Monday morning under the heading 'Blue Monday Chat.'

"So the malady that started a year or two before waxed to a fever, and the time came when they took Eddie off the crime beat and ordered him to be funny for a column every day. He collaborated with the various artists on the paper and wrote most of the feature stuff for the Sunday edition. Those readers who found amusement in the writings of A. N. Benedict, G. A. Edwards, Mr. Mutt (long before Bud Fisher created him) and Charlie the Barber would probably have laughed just as loud, or maybe louder, had they known that Eddie Guest was writing it all. And maybe they'd have laughed still louder had they known that he was dubbed A. N. Benedict at that time because that's what he was. He married Miss Nellie Crossman in 1906.

"From that time to this, Eddie Guest has written daily for *The Free Press* a column of verse and anecdotes and epigrams and what-not published under the heading 'Breakfast Table Chat.'"

Although born in Birmingham, England, on August 20, 1881, Guest merits the right of a place in this volume by reason of the fact that his poems are strictly American. He came to America, more specifically to Detroit, Michigan, with his parents in 1891, and in 1895 joined the staff of *The Detroit Free Press*. It was ten years later that he began to write an original column for this paper, and, as he expresses it, "I have been at it ever since." He has published three books of verse, "Home Rhymes," "Just Glad Things," and "Breakfast Table Chat," and in 1916 the Reilly & Britton Company introduced him to a larger public, with "A Heap o' Livin'," followed with "Just Folks," and in March, 1918, "Over Here," a collection of wartime rhymes.

"American poets," says Mr. Guest, "have inspired millions of Americans with love for the ideals of democracy, and are to-day crystallizing in the beauty of their songs the splendor of unselfish, patriotic service. Its future is rich with opportunity. Many fine minds are turning to poetry as the medium which best expresses their thoughts, and the great mass of American readers is finding in American poetry the mirror of themselves."

Guest is particularly well known for his poems about children, although his poem "Home" is perhaps the best loved.

HOME

It takes a heap o' livin' in a house t' make it home,
A heap o' sun an' shadder, an' ye sometimes have t' roam
Afore ye really 'preciate the things ye lef' behind,
An' hunger for 'em somehow, with 'em allus on yer mind.
It don't make any differunce how rich ye get t' be,
How much yer chairs an' tables cost, how great yer luxury;
It ain't home t' ye, though it be the palace of a king,
Until somehow yer soul is sort o' wrapped round everything.

Home ain't a place that gold can buy or get up in a minute;
Afore it's home there's got t' be a heap o' livin' in it;
Within the walls there's got t' be some babies born, and then
Right there ye've got t' bring 'em up t' women good, an' men;
And gradjerly, as time goes on, ye find ye wouldn't part
With anything they ever used—they've grown into yer heart:
The old high chairs, the playthings, too, the little shoes they wore
Ye hoard; an' if ye could ye'd keep the thumb-marks on the door.

Ye've got t' weep t' make it home, ye've got t' sit an' sigh
An' watch beside a loved one's bed, an' know that Death is nigh;
An' in the stillness o' the night t' see Death's angel come,
An' close the eyes o' her that smiled, an' leave her sweet voice dumb.
Fer these are scenes that grip the heart, an' when yer tears are dried,

Ye find the home is dearer than it was, an' sanctified;
An' tuggin' at yer always are the pleasant memories
O' her that was an' is no more—ye can't escape from these.

Ye've got t' sing an' dance fer years, ye've got t' romp an' play,
An' learn t' love the things ye have by usin' 'em each day;
Even the roses 'round the porch must blossom year by year
Afore they 'come a part o' ye, suggestin' some one dear
Who used t' love 'em long ago, an' trained 'em jes' t' run
The way they do, so's they would get the early mornin' sun;
Ye've got t' love each brick an' stone from cellar up t' dome;
It takes a heap o' livin' in a house t' make it home.

Berton Braley

Of various collected volumes of verse of Berton Braley's, none offers a more interesting study of this popular poet than "A Banjo at Armageddon." This book is divided into five parts, subtitled "In the 'Big Show,'" "Open Air Ballads," "City Ballads," "Farce and Frivol," and "Ballads of the Workaday Adventures."

His concluding paragraph in "America Speaks" demonstrates his ability as interpreter of American patriotism:

I know my sons; the grand old strain is in them,
And they will never fail me in my need,
But talk of fame and glory will not win them
For "no heroics" is their quiet creed;

They'll jest at service in a cynic manner
And swear that guns would make them flee pell-mell,
And yet I know they'd bear my starry banner
If need be, through the very fires of hell!

Berton Braley was born in Madison, Wisconsin, January 29, 1882. He was graduated from the University of Wisconsin in 1905 and was married to Marion A. Rubincam of Philadelphia in 1915. As journalist and poet he has contributed about five thousand poems and three hundred short stories to numerous magazines and newspapers throughout this country.

Included in his works are "Sonnets of a Freshman," "Oracle on Smoke," "Sonnets of a Suffragette," "Songs of a Workaday World," "Things as They Are," and "A Banjo at Armageddon."

Thomas A. Daly

Thomas Augustine Daly—T. A. Daly, Litt. D., poet, humorist, lecturer, newspaper writer—all are one and the same.

To begin at the beginning and according to Harry Dunbar, Thomas Daly and his "Pegasus" made their dual début as follows: "A dozen years ago there appeared in the East a new light. Since then millions of readers of newspapers and magazines have come to know 'Carlotta,' 'Giuseppe,' and 'Tony,' not as dumb and soulless 'dagoes,' but as honest, industrious, lovable, but new-made Americans; and myriads of delighted readers have welcomed, too, the clever Irish poems from the pen of America's newest dialectician,

Thomas Augustine Daly, while hundreds of audiences have heard Mr. Daly in author's recitals and humorous addresses.

"As the spokesman for these Americans of the first generation, as their interpreter and friend, we honor the genius of a countryman, and thus we honor ourselves. Mr. Daly's poems are among the brightest gems of recent literature, and it is because of them that Fordham University conferred upon the poet the degree of Doctor of Letters. It would not surprise his friends if a similar honor were to come to him from abroad. An American literary man traveling in England recently wrote: 'I must tell you that while I was stopping in Oxford the other day I found a warm admirer of T. A. Daly among the dons of the University, a Mr. Osborne by name, who has developed quite a Daly cult among the undergraduates, who are reading him as everybody reads Dowson at Harvard.'

"As a humorist Mr. Daly has won unqualified distinction, having been made president of the American Press Humorists' Association, and recognized by practically every metropolitan newspaper as one of the cleverest of humorous speakers. He is a member of the famous 'Players' and 'Authors' Clubs of New York and of the 'Poetry Society of America.'"

Mr. Daly begins his book "Carmina" with "Two 'Mericana Men." This poem denotes his favorite style and theme:

Beeg Irish cop dat walk hees beat
  By dees peanutta stan',
Rist wo, t'ree week w'en we are meet
  Ees call me "Dagoman."

An' w'en he see how mad I gat,
  Wheech eesa pleass heem, too,
Wan day he say: "W'at's dat,
  Ain't 'Dago' name for you?
Dat's 'Merica name, you know,
  For man from Eetaly;
Eet ess no harm for call you so,
  Den why be mad weeth me?"
First time he talka deesa way
  I am too mad for a speak,
But nexta time I justa say:
  "All righta, Meester Meeck!"

O! my, I nevva hear bayfore
  Sooch langwadge like he say;
An' he don't look at me no more
  For mebbe two, t'ree day.
But pretta soon agen I see
  Dees beeg poleecaman
Dat com' an' growl an' say to me:
  "Hallo, Eyetalian!
Now, mebbe so you gon' deny
  Dat dat's a name for you."
I smila back an' mak' reply:
  "No, Irish, dat's a true."
"Ha! Joe," he cry, "you theenk dat we
  Should call you 'Merican?"
"Dat's gooda 'nough," I say, "for me,
  Eef dat's w'at you are, Dan."

So now all times we speaka so
  Like gooda 'Merican:
He say to me, "Good morna, Joe,"
  I say, "Good morna, Dan."

Mr. Daly's first book, "Canzoni," was issued in

1906, and the poet was greeted with applause by the critics. Colonel Roosevelt, then President, was one of the first to acclaim him. "Your poems," he wrote, "are charming. I am particularly pleased with 'The Song of the Thrush,' and I hope you'll give us many more like it."

"Canzoni" is now in its fifteenth thousand, and his other books have also become "standards" in the bookshops. "Carmina," published by the John Lane Company, of New York and London, is now in its seventh thousand, and the same is true of "Madrigali," published in 1912 by David McKay, Philadelphia. Last year, 1913, the Devin-Adair Company of New York City, brought out his "Little Polly's Pomes" and Davis McKay published "Songs of Wedlock" in 1916.

The following letter from Mr. Daly to the author is a "close-up" of interest:

"It's sweet of you to invite me to your party, and I'll be glad of a chance to show off my best clothes. Or would you prefer that I be just naturally comic?

"I rather balk at the autobiographical stuff, but if everybody's doing it, I won't spoil the procession. I can tell you 'most anything you'd care to hear.

"I like all kinds of life and fun, but I have my serious moods and sometimes take myself ditto-ly. I am a newspaper poet because I have elected to be and not because of a landslide of magazine rejection-slips against me. I naturally believe the bulk of America's output of newspaper verse assays more gold to the ton than the magazine poetry shows. I like a lot of things that I have done, but you haven't time to listen. You should hear chanted in my own deep and expressive

voice my 'Song of the Thrush' (Irish), 'The Birth of Tom O'Shanter' and 'Ode to a Thrush' (English undefiled); 'Da Leetla Boy' and 'The Audience' (Italian-American). I've written one really good sonnet, 'To a Tenant,' and ever so many ballades, rondeaux, etc. But this is enough, surely.

"I'm very fond of other poets, but not when they get together—say at the aviary in Gramercy Park—to sing competitively and pick each other's feathers. I like Shakespeare and Whitcomb Riley, the two kits (Marlowe and Morley), Shelley and Marquis, Keats and Masefield, all the Elizabethans—in fact, everybody who ever sang even one wood note wild. As for the *vers librists,* I just can't help saying "to hell with them'—even if Amy Lowell *is* a perfect gent!"

And just to make this biography complete, Daly was born in Philadelphia, May 28, 1871, and was educated at public schools, Villanova College, Pa., and Fordham University to the close of the sophomore year, 1889.

Anthony Euwer

Anthony Euwer is known for his original work, "The Limeratomy," an unusual essay into the too seldom explored fields of the limerick. But in spite of the popularity of this book, it is perhaps for "Wings," made popular in Liberty Loan campaigns, that he has become best known. From it these lines are quoted:

> If wings will help our men to see
> Some Boche's belching battery,
> Unloosing from a screen of trees
> Its screeching death upon the breeze—

Or help our giant guns to search
With truer aim each hidden perch
Of Teuton guns, and make them meek
Ere they again may chance to speak—
If wings, oh, God, will do these things,
Then give us wings.

If great destroying wings might stay
Munitions on their hurried way,
Or hold a reinforcement back
By dropping ruin on its track,
Or yet set free the pent-up hell
Of depots filled with shot and shell,
Or swiftly give eternal sleep
To ships that prowl the nether deep—
If wings, oh, God, will do these things,
Then give us wings and still more wings. . . .

Anthony Henderson Euwer was born in Allegheny, Pa., February 11, 1877. He studied at Shadyside Academy, Pittsburgh, Princeton and at the New York School of Expression and American Academy of Dramatic Arts. He makes his home in New York when not on poetry reading tours.

The writings of Mr. Euwer include "Rickety Rimes and Riginaro," "Christopher Cricket on Cats," "Rhymes of Our Valley," and "Wings and Other War Rhymes."

Charles Hanson Towne

Charles Hanson Towne, aside from being editor of *McClure's,* is entitled to no inconsiderable credit among American poets for his numerous contributions of verse to leading American magazines.

"To One in Heaven," published in *Good Housekeeping,* presents the genius of Mr. Towne in one of his most able moods:

After you died, a few stray letters came,
Bearing your name.
A friend across the sea
Wrote with the old light laughter; tenderly
She wished that you were with her, never knowing
That now for you the winds of heaven were blowing;
That you were faring to a distant bourne,
Whence your white feet would nevermore return.

And then there came,
Like little bundles of flame,
Bright-colored ribbons—red, and yellow, and blue,
Samples from some gay shop, dainty as you.
A bit of lace, a bit of gossamer,
A rainbow sheaf, like dreams that never were.
And when I saw them, through my blinding tears,
I thought of your bright years,
Your love of all this filmy green and gold—
And your brief story told.

I hope the angels give you your desire,
O little heart of fire—
Give you the fairy garments that you crave
Even beyond the grave!
You would not be quite happy in your new place
Without your golden lace,
Without those little, trivial, tender things
The looms wove out of dim imaginings.
For you loved feathery textures, airy spinnings,
Like cobwebs from the world's remote beginnings;
Soft stuffs as fleecy at the clouds above,
That grew more lovely for your lovely love.

Who knows but now your wings may be of fleece,
Your robe of some fine fabric made of these:
Rainbows and star-dust and a lost moonbeam,
And a white thought from Lady Mary's dream
Of that first moment when she knew that One
Would live through her. . . . Is this your garment spun
From rapture at the living loom of heaven?
O little angel-maid, God's gifts are freely given!

Mr. Towne is the author of "The Quiet Singer and Other Poems," "Manhattan," "Youth, and Other Poems," "The Tumble Man," with M. Mayer; "A Love Garden" and "An April" in collaboration with H. Clough-Leighter, and "A Lover in Damascus," "Five Little Japanese Songs," "A Dream of Egypt" and "The Little Princess" in collaboration with Amy Woodforde-Finden.

Charles Hanson Towne was born in Louisville, Kentucky, on February 2, 1877, and was educated in the common schools of New York and attended the College of the City of New York for one year.

John Curtis Underwood

Poet of the chorus girl, the motion picture star, the straphanger, and all those various types which make up the every-day life, is John Curtis Underwood. Insurgent though he is, he has a knack of portraying the soul of the tenderloin in a realistic, graphic fashion.

In his poem "Central" he writes:

Though men may build their bridges high and plant their piers below the sea,

And drive their trains across the sky; a higher task is
left to me.
I bridge the void 'twixt soul and soul; I bring the long-
ing lovers near.
I draw you to your spirit's goal. I serve the ends of
fraud and fear.

The older fates sat in the sun. The cords they spun were
short and slight.
I set my stitches one by one, where life electric fetters
night
Till it outstrips the planet's speed, and out of darkness
leaps today;
And men in Maine shall hear and heed a voice from San
Francisco Bay.

He has published four volumes of poems: "The Iron Muse" (1910), "Americans," (1912), "Processionals" (1915), and "War Flames" (1917).

Ella Wheeler Wilcox

Whatever one may think of the merits of Ella Wheeler Wilcox's writings, which have had so wide a newspaper circulation, certainly here is a woman whose prolific pen has made her known to thousands of people who would hardly be classed as orthodox poetry readers.

As a commercial venture Ella Wheeler Wilcox's verse has been a decided success, and an admirable medium of increased circulation for *The New York Journal* and allied Hearst publications, for which papers she has been an editorial writer and contributor for a number of years.

It was with the publication of "Poems of Passion" that Mrs. Wilcox enlarged her following of readers, and while much water has run under the bridge since this was published, there is a noticeable improvement in her latest book, "Sonnets of Sorrow and Triumph." For example, the second stanza in that section of the book bearing "Sonnets of Sorrow":

I know my heart has always been devout,
And faith burned in me like a clear white flame.
There was no room among my thoughts for doubt.
Though hopes were thwarted and though sorrows came,
God seemed a living Presence, kind and just,
And ever near. Yea, even in great grief
When parents, friends and offspring turned to dust
He stood beside me, refuge and relief.

But when one hideous night you went away
Deaf to my cry and to my pleadings dumb,
You took God with you. Now in vain I pray
And beg Him to return: He does not come:
Nor has He sent one Angel from His horde
To comfort me with some convincing word.

Here is a real and universal experience for a theme, and this book comes nearest to vital writing of all that Mrs. Wilcox has done. Edward N. Teall, writing in *The New York Sun,* says: "The 'sonnet sequence' in good hands is very high art, and less capably managed it can get pretty low. Ella Wheeler Wilcox's 'Sonnets of Sorrow' attain a lofty level—the paradox is harmless—in plumbing the depths of a heart's despair. Her 'Sonnets of Triumph,' continu-

ing the paradox, are on a much lower plane of art in measuring the sad soul's upward recovery.

"The sorrow, if not more genuine than the joy, is at least better founded; for it rests upon the universal experience of the bereft, while the joy springs from the thin soil of spiritualism. The collection of poems —not all of them sonnets—has true logical consequence, and that is a major merit. The individual poems have certain characteristic and easily recognizable ellawheelerwilcoxian defects of technique. Equally characteristic is the mixture of easy sentiment and cheap hyperbole with truly noble feeling and phraseology."

Ella Wheeler Wilcox was born in Johnstown Centre, Wisconsin, in 1855. She was graduated from the University of Wisconsin, and married Robert M. Wilcox in 1884. She now makes her home at "The Bungalow," Short Beach, Connecticut.

Her works include the following:

"An Ambitious Man," "Poems of Pleasure," "A Woman of the World," "A Double Life," "Three Women," "Poems of Sentiment," "Drops of Water," "Kingdom of Love," "New Thought, Common Sense, and What Life Means to Me," "Sweet Danger," "An Erring Woman's Love," "The Love Sonnets of Abelard and Heloise," "Was It Suicide?" "Men, Women and Emotion," "Poems of Progress," "New Thought Pastels," "Everyday Thoughts," "The Beautiful Land of Nod," "Sailing Sunny Seas," "Poems of Passion," "People of Power," "Gems," "Maurine," "Around the Year With Ella Wheeler Wilcox," "Picked Poems," and "Women of the World."

Arthur Guiterman

Arthur Guiterman has made his poetry known to thousands through his contributions to *Life*.

"Though of American parentage," says Mr. Guiterman, "I was born, November 20, 1871, in Vienna, Austria, my name being registered as that of a newly-arrived citizen of the United States at the American consulate at the time. The family returned to New York when I was two years old, so I haven't any European recollections. I was educated mainly at Grammar School 69, and at the College of the City of New York, from which I was graduated in 1891. I'm only a plain B.A., but they saw fit to elect me to Phi Beta Kappa a couple of years ago.

"I stumbled into journalism and various editorial jobs, but have been out of harness for a dozen years or so, devoting myself almost exclusively to writing verse. For the last nine years I have been the principal contributor of verse to *Life*, and I suppose that I am popularly known as the originator of 'Rhymed Reviews' and other humorous metrical stunts in that paper. But don't try to pigeon-hole me in any compartment, or I'll fool you; because I have always written, and shall continue to write, on any theme that interests me or fills me with enthusiasm, and in whatever style happens."

Mr. Guiterman's works include: "Betal Nuts," "Guest Book," "Sonnets from the Portuguese," "Orestes" (with André Tridon), "The Laughing Muse," and "The Mirthful Lyre." Among his most popular ballads are the titles of "The Call to the

Colors," "The Rush of the Oregon," "Quivira," "The Storm Ship," "Sleepy Hollow," "Haarlem Heights," "The Ballad of John Paul Jones," "The Quest of the Ribband," "The Legend of the First Cam-u-el," and "This Is She." In the fable of the "Beaver and the Chick-a-dee" there is a lesson that many moderns should take to heart:

A melancholy Beaver
  Resided by a rill;
He either had a fever
  Or else he had a chill;

For Mental Inquisition
  Had filled him full of dole
About his Earthly Mission
  Or his Eternal Soul.

In June, instead of basking
  Or helping build the dam,
He vexed his conscience, asking
  "Why Is It That I am?"

Mr. Guiterman was married in 1909 to Vida Lindo of New York and Panama.

CHAPTER XV

MARGARET WIDDEMER, EUNICE TIETJENS, CLEMENT WOOD, HERMANN HAGEDORN, FRANCIS CARLIN, RIDGELY TORRENCE, HARRY KEMP

Margaret Widdemer

Few poets of today are so fortunate in selecting titles for their respective works as is Margaret Widdemer. Her most recent volume of verse, "The Old Road to Paradise," has music in its name, and Miss Widdemer has written no finer poem than the one from which this book takes its title.

Ours is a dark Easter-tide,
And a scarlet Spring,
But high up at Heaven-Gate
All the saints sing,
Glad for the great companies
Returning to their King.

Oh, in youth the dawn's a rose,
Dusk's an amethyst,
All the roads from dusk to dawn
Gay they wind and twist;
The old road to Paradise
Easy it is missed!
But out on the wet battlefields,
Few the roadways wind,

One to grief, one to death
No road that's kind—
The old road to Paradise
Plain it is to find!

(Martin in his Colonel's cloak,
Joan in her mail,
David with his crown and sword—
None there be that fail—
Down the road to Paradise
Stand to greet and hail!)

Where the dark's a terror-thing,
Morn a hope doubt-tossed.
Where the lads lie thinking long
Out in rain and frost,
There they find their God again,
Long ago they lost:

Where the night comes cruelly,
Where the hurt men moan,
Where the crushed forgotten ones
Whisper prayers alone,
Christ along the battlefields
Comes to lead His own:

Ours is a sad Easter-tide,
And a woeful day,
But high up at Heaven-Gate
The saints are all gay,
For the old road to Paradise,
That's a crowded way!

Critics have found this to be one of the finest war-inspired poems; certainly it has been a popular one,

and it is a just example of Miss Widdemer's beautiful imaginative work.

Margaret Widdemer was born in Doylestown, Pennsylvania, and was educated at home. She is popular as novelist as well as poet.

Columbia University divided the Poetry Society prize of $500 for the best volume of verse published by an American author during the calendar year of 1918 between Margaret Widdemer and Carl Sandburg.

Her other volume of published verse appeared under the title of "Factories and Other Poems."

Miss Widdemer was married to Robert Haven Schauffler, also a writer, in September, 1919.

Eunice Tietjens

William Stanley Braithwaite, some few years ago, gave prominent mention in his annual anthology to Eunice Tietjens, whose work in verse was beginning to attract considerable attention among the more discerning. She has written but one volume of verse, "Profiles from China," an admirable piece of writing, which was published in 1917.

From "The Most Sacred Mountain," published in *Poetry, A Magazine of Verse,* of which Miss Tietjens is an associate editor, the following is quoted:

Here, when Confucius came, a half a thousand years before the Nazarene, he stepped, with me, thus into timelessness.
The stone beside us waxes old, the carven stone that

says: "On this spot once Confucius stood and felt
the smallness of the world below."
The stone grows old:
Eternity is not for stones.

But I shall go down from this airy space, this swift white
peace, this stinging exultation.
And time will close about me, and my soul stir to the
rhythm of the daily round.
Yet, having known, life will not press so close, and always
I shall feel time ravel thin about me;
For once I stood
In the white windy presence of eternity.

Eunice Tietjens was born in Chicago in 1884, and after having studied in Paris, Dresden and Geneva, returned to the city of her birth, where she makes her home.

Clement Wood

Poetry, tennis and life—these, according to his own declaration, are the interests of Clement Wood, whose first volume of verse, "Glad of Earth," was published early in 1917.

In *The Newarker* appeared one of Mr. Wood's most significant poems, which he calls "The Smithy of God, a Chant," which concludes as follows:

But still I labor and bend and toil,
Shaping anew the stuff I spoil;
And out of the smothering din and grime
I forge a city for all time:
A city beautiful and clean,
With wide sweet avenues of green,

With gracious homes and houses of trade,
Where souls as well as things are made.
I forge a people fit to dwell
Unscathed in the hottest heart of hell,
And fit to shine, erect and straight,
When we shall see His kingdom come
On earth, over all of Christendom,—
And I stand up, shining and great,
Lord of an unforeseen estate.
Then I will cry, and clearly then,
I am Newark, forger of men.

Clement Wood was born in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, September 1, 1888. He resides in New York.

Hermann Hagedorn

Hermann Hagedorn is engaged in writing and farming in normal times, but during the war has been spending his efforts in propaganda work on the executive committee of the Vigilantes.

"To the Makers of Song," with which William Stanley Braithwaite began his "Anthology of Magazine Verse for 1917," Mr. Hagedorn writes:

Surely the time for making songs has come
Now that the Spring is in the air again!
Trees blossom though men bleed; and after rain
The robins hop; and soon the bees will hum.

Long was the winter, long our lips were dumb,
Long under snow our loyal dreams have lain.
Surely the time for making songs has come
Now that the Spring is in the air again!

The Spring!—with bugles and a rumbling drum!
Oh, builders of high music out of pain,
Now is the hour with singing to make vain
The boast of kings in Pandemonium!

Surely the time for making songs has come!

Born in New York City on July 18, 1882, Mr. Hagedorn was educated at Bedford Academy, Polytechnic Institute, Brooklyn, The Hill School, and Harvard University. His home is at Sunnytop Farm, Fairfield, Connecticut.

Francis Carlin

Under the title of "The New Floor-Walker Poet Genius," William Stanley Braithwaite, writing in *The Boston Transcript*, of Francis Carlin, says: "Most Irish poets, it seems, have two names, but I know only one who has two lives. . . . New York is nourishing a new poetic sensation in the person of a young Irishman whose vocation is pursued as the floor superintendent in the rug and drapery department of the R. H. Macy Co.'s store. All day this young man is the efficient director of his employers' interests and the public's needs, keeping the service of his assistants up to standard and adjusting the claims of patrons to their satisfaction. The superintendent is Mr. J. F. C. MacDonnell, a bright, alert young man of mercantile habits and suavity; the poet is Francis Carlin, with a passion for Beauty and Ireland that is one of the most extraordinary accidents—I know no other term by which to name his case—in contemporary American poetry.

I heard everywhere in New York City, during my recent visit, gossip and praise of this poet about whom little or nothing has been said in print. My curiosity and interest led me on a pilgrimage to "Macy's" to see the poet, to get into the current, as it were, of his personality, and to get him to tell me something of himself for readers waiting to hear the news of a 'new poet.'"

Mr. Carlin dedicates his book, "My Ireland," as follows:

It is here that the book begins
And it is here that a prayer is asked
For the soul of the scribe who wrote it for
The glory of God,
The honor of Erin
And the pleasure of the woman
Who came from Both—
His mother.

Of the Celtic poems written by Mr. Carlin, "The Provinces" best shows the piquant music of this American Celt:

O God, that I
May arise with the Gael
To the song in the sky
Over Inisfail!

Ulster, your dark
Mold for me;
Munster, a lark
Hold for me!

Connaght, a *caoine,*
Croon for me;
Leinster, a mean
Stone for me!

O God, that I
May arise with the Gael
To the song in the sky
Over Inisfail!

Although Mr. Carlin sings the true lyric of Erin, he is an American by birth, having been born at Bay Shore, L. I., on April 7, 1881.

Ridgely Torrence

"Granny Maumee and Other Plays" caused a distinct ripple in New York's theatrical season when these were presented in 1917. Ridgely Torrence, their author, instantly came to the fore as a playwright to be considered, although many of his poems—extremely good ones, by the way—had found their way into print.

His lines, "The Son," appeared as follows in the "Monroe-Henderson Anthology":

I heard an old farm-wife,
Selling some barley,
Mingle her life with life
And the name "Charley."

Saying: "The crop's all in,
We're about through now;

quainted with the younger radical set. After a full season in London, he sailed for New York on the *Kaiser and Augusta Victoria,* arriving July 2nd. In August the World War cast its shadow upon the earth and Mr. Kemp wished to enlist in the Foreign Legion, but Cupid changed his plans, for he met Miss Mary Pyne and married her soon after. Since then he has lived in New York City.

Mr. Kemp is the author of "Judas," "The Cry of Youth," and "The Thresher's Wife," but distinctive among the war poems of 1917 was "Two Ways," published in *The New York Tribune*:

It's a long, long journey to the weary end of war,
While the shells burst above into star on colored star
And the guns lift and flash like the Northern Lights afar.

It's a long, long journey where the sniper's bullet speeds,
And the hid machine gun sows all the air with deadly seeds,
While each grappling hour brings forth Iliads of noble deeds.

It's a long, long journey as the Huns are hammered back
By the big guns and the small, bayonet and gas attack,
Where the fields are blasted bare and the towns are charred and black. . . .

It's a short, short journey to the peace that must not be,
To the ready lips that wait for the cheek of liberty—
To the Judas peace that waits with its thirty pence for fee!

CHAPTER XVI

WILLIAM STANLEY BRAITHWAITE, THOMAS WALSH, WILLARD WATTLES, BLISS CARMAN, SHERWOOD ANDERSON

William Stanley Braithwaite

There are few critics of American poetry whose criticism is more respected than that of William Stanley Braithwaite. His annual anthology of magazine verse is one of the literary events of each fall publishing season.

No critic of American poetry has been more constructive in his writing than Mr. Braithwaite. He has sponsored the good that has manifested itself in many of our younger poets and his enthusiasm is of a sane, well-founded stock. He seeks the best in our American verse and nearly always finds it.

It is therefore of two-fold interest when Mr. Braithwaite produces such poetry as "The Wet Woods," quoted from Edward J. O'Brien's "Masque of Poets."

This path leads to the laurel,
  And that winds to the burn;
Hemlocks, pines and birches,
  Know the one that I turn.

It is wet in the woods today,—
And perhaps, the sun tomorrow,
Shall weave its gold, while away
I will be alone with my sorrow.

On December 6, 1878, William Stanley Braithwaite was born in Boston, the son of Mr. and Mrs. William Smith Braithwaite. Unlike most critics and poets he is mainly self-educated. He married Emma Kelly of Montross, Virginia, on July 30, 1903. As editor of *The Poetry Journal,* Boston, Mr. Braithwaite won admittance to the Poetry Society of America. He is now a member of the Authors' Club. His works include "Lyrics of Life and Love," "The Book of Elizabethan Verse," "The House of Falling Leaves," "The Book of Georgian Verse," "The Book of Restoration Verse," "Anthology of Magazine Verse for 1913," "The Message of the Trees," "Contemporary Reviews-Essays in Literary Opinion," and "New England Poems and Lyrics." Mr. Braithwaite is also a contributor to the *Boston Transcript, Forum, Century, Lippincott's, Scribners, Atlantic Monthly,* etc. He resides at Boston, Mass.

Thomas Walsh

Thomas Walsh, critic and poet, has to his credit a number of American poems of significant value in the estimate of contemporary American poets. There is a love of the old world and the new in his writings, as may be noted in the opening paragraph of his poem, "The Great Adventure," and his lines, "On the Lutes

of France," in his volume, "Gardens Overseas and Other Poems":

In my heart is the sound of drums
And the sweep of the bugles calling;
The day of the Great Adventure comes,
And the tramp of feet is falling, falling,
Ominous falling, everywhere,
By street and lane, by field and square,—
To answer the Voice appalling!
(From "The Great Adventure")

THE FAUN

A terra-cotta Faun grimaces
Smiling o'er his grassy places,
Doubtless in his foresight keen
Thinking on the hapless scene
Soon to mock this pause serene,
That hath led me and hath led thee
In pilgrim's doleful vagrancy
Unto this moment now, that comes
To sweep us to the sound of drums.
(From "On the Lutes of France.")

Thomas Walsh was born in Brooklyn, New York, October 14, 1875. He was educated in the Georgetown University, Columbia, and Notre Dame University, and was author of the class poem of Georgetown University in 1892. He has been a contributor of both prose and verse to English and American magazines and reviews. Mr. Walsh is a member of the Royal Academy of Seville, Georgetown Society, New York, Colombian (S. A.) Academy of Letters, and the Hispanic Society of America.

Mr. Walsh's works comprise the following titles: "The Prison Ships," "The Pilgrim Kings," "Eleven Poems of Ruben Dario," and "Gardens Overseas and Other Poems."

Willard Wattles

Magazine editors and book publishers have forecast a brilliant future for Willard Wattles, who has seen much of his verse already published in various representative magazines and whose first book appeared in the fall of 1918 under the title of "Lanterns for Gethsemane." This volume is made up of a number of lyrics so arranged as to form a long sequence, the one central theme of which is a modern and somewhat mystical treatment of the religion and personality of Christ. His poem, "Return," published in *Contemporary Verse,* shows the religious quality of his work. The following paragraphs are taken from it:

Jesus, Jesus,
  Go along before
To a high house
  With a silver door.

But I'll stop first
  To clean my feet,
And then sit down
  By the chimney seat.

And Jesus will laugh
  And say it's good
That I've moved into
  His neighborhood.

When he lights his pipe
I think he'll scratch
The Morning-Star
For his safety-match.

We'll drink all night
From a good brown cup,
And not go to bed
Till the sun comes up.

Wise man, wise man,
Fingers and thumbs,
This is the way
That Jesus comes.

Willard Wattles was born at Baynesville, Kansas, June 8, 1888, and was educated at the University of Kansas, where he was an instructor until the War called his services somewhere "over there." According to Mr. Braithwaite, Wattles is "university instructor, harvest-hand, critic, hobo, poet, and interested in practical Christianity, but not in creeds." He was co-author with Harry Kemp of a volume of verse, "Songs from the Hill." He makes his home in Lawrence, Kansas.

Bliss Carman

When Edward J. O'Brien was conducting his Masque of Poets in *The Bookman,* there was one of the collection that caused more than passing comment, and many were the opinions given as to the author. It's title was "Moment Musicale," and when the authors of the respective poems were announced,

the name of Bliss Carman was attached to this poem, one of the finest in the series:

The round moon hangs above the rim
  Of silent and blue shadowed trees.
And all the earth is vague and dim
  In its blue veil of mysteries.

On such a night one must believe
  The Golden Age returns again
With lyric beauty, to retrieve
  The world from dreariness and pain.

And down the wooded aisles, behold
  Where dancers through the dusk appear!
Piping their rapture as of old,
  They bring immortal freedom near.

A moment on the brink of night
  They tread their transport in the dew
And to the rhythm of their delight,
  Behold, all things are made anew!

Bliss Carman was born at Fredericton, N. B., on April 15, 1861. He was educated at the University of New Brunswick, University of Edinburgh and Harvard. He has been editor of *The Independent, The Chap Book,* and is author of the following works: "Low Tide on Grand Pré," "A Sea-Mark," "Behind the Arras," "Ballads of Lost Haven," "By the Aurelian Wall," "Songs from Vagabondia" (with Richard Hovey), "More Songs from Vagabondia," "Last Songs of Vagabondia," "St. Kavin," "A Ballad," "At Michaelmas," "The Girl in the Poster," "The Green Book of the Bards," "The Vengeance of Noel Brassard," "Ode

on the Coronation of King Edward," "From the Book of Myths," "Pipes of Pan, No. 1," "Pipes of Pan, No. 2," "Pipes of Pan, Nos. 3, 4 and 5," "Poems," "Collected Edition," "Kinship of the Book of Valentines," "The Making of Personality," "The Gate of Peace," "The Rough Rider," "A Painter's Holiday," "Echoes from Vagabondia," "Daughters of Dawn" (with Mary Perry King).

Mr. Carman's home is at New Caanan, Conn.

Sherwood Anderson

Sherwood Anderson's "Spring Song," published in his "Mid-American Chants," is one of the most admirable poems to come from this writer of the midwest.

SPRING SONG

In the forest, amid old trees and wet dead leaves, a shrine.
Men on the wet leaves kneeling.
The spirit of God in the air above a shrine.

Now, America, you press your lips to mine,
Feel on your lips the throbbing of my blood.
Christ, come to life and life calling,
Sweet and strong.

Spring. God in the air above old fields.
Farmers marking fields for the planting of the corn.
Fields marked for corn to stand in long straight aisles.

In the spring I press your body down on wet cold new-plowed ground.
Men, give your souls to me.
I would have my sacred way with you.

In the forest, amid old trees and wet dead leaves, a shrine.
Men rising from the kneeling place to sing.
Everywhere in the fields now the orderly planting of corn.

In his own preface to "Mid-American Chants," Mr. Anderson says: "For this book of chants I ask simply that it be allowed to stand stark against the background of my own place and generation. In secret a million men and women are trying, as I have tried here, to express the hunger within and I have dared to put these chants forth only because I hope and believe they may find an answering and clearer call in the hearts of other Mid-Americans."

Mr. Anderson also is a short story writer of unusual and unique style. He makes his home in New York.

CHAPTER XVII

FLORENCE EARLE COATES, AMELIA JOSEPHINE BURR, EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY, LIZETTE WOODWORTH REESE, BENJAMIN R. C. LOW, HAROLD COOK

Florence Earle Coates

"The Smile of Rheims," by Florence Earle Coates, published in *The Bellman,* is one of the most admirable poems yet to come from this talented poet.

"The smile," they called her,—"La Sourire"; and fair—
  A sculptured angel on the northern door
  Of the Cathedral's west façade—she wore
Through the long centuries of toil and care
That smile, mysteriously wrought and rare,
  As if she saw brave visions evermore—
  Kings, and an armored Maid who lilies bore,
And all the glories that had once been there.

How like to thee, her undefeated Land!
  Wounded by bursting shells, a little space
    Broken she lay beneath her ancient portal;
But lifted from the earth with trembling hand,
  Victorious, still glowed upon her face
    Thy smile, heroic France, love-given and immortal!

Florence Earle Coates was born in Philadelphia and educated at private schools and at the Convent of the

Sacred Heart, France. She also studied in Brussels.

On January 7, 1879, she was married to Edward Hornor Coates. She was president of the Browning Society, 1895 to 1903 and 1907 and 1908, and is a founder of the Contemporary Club, Philadelphia, 1886.

Her published works include: "Poems," "Mine and Thine," "Lyrics of Life," "Ode on the Coronation of King George V," and "The Unconquered Air."

"To Mrs. Coates, as to many of our poets, literature and its heroes offer a cherished stimulus; yet she makes us feel, much more than do many of her contemporaries, how suggestive are the things that lie beyond the printed page. So clearly indicative of her whole attitude as a poet is the 'Song of Life,' that we must quote it intact:

Maiden of the laughing eyes,
  Primrose-kirtled, wingèd, free,
Virgin daughter of the skies—
Joy—whom gods and mortals prize,
  Share thy smiles with me!

Yet—lest I, unheeding, borrow
  Pleasure that today endears
And benumbs the heart tomorrow—
Turn not wholly from me, Sorrow!
  Let me share thy tears!

Give me of thy fulness, Life!
  Pulse and passion, power, breath,
Vision pure, heroic strife—
Give me of thy fulness, Life!
  Nor deny me death!

"The sensitive spirit reflected in these lines runs through all of Mrs. Coates' work. It comes out in her commemorative poems, in her graceful tributes to Stedman, Stevenson and others; it is discernible in such a trilogy as she has written on an historic figure, Joan of Arc; it illuminates the vignette of pathos which she calls 'Alms,' and it tells constantly in those poems in which purely poetical moods are expressed. Her optimism has no strain of weakness; it is rooted rather in a fine and courageous conception of life."

This is *The New York Tribune's* very excellent summary of Mrs. Coates' work, whose poems have found much favor with critics throughout the country. James Whitcomb Riley said of it, "The poems are truly poems because of their simple, natural inspiration. A new uplift and hopefulness comes with the reading of the volume—every line!"

Amelia Josephine Burr

While the name of Amelia Josephine Burr has for many years been associated with the best in American poetry, it is in "The Silver Trumpet" that the old Revolutionary spirit of America finds birth once more in a new war verse that is of compelling merit.

"Old feelings love old forms, and Miss Burr, never much prone to capering or simpering innovation, has spoken reverently and simply in the speech and intonation of the fathers," says *The Nation.* "The poems have their limitations; they are a little stressful, a little hortatory; the distinction they achieve may not have that finality which means duration."

Is all our world upon a counter laid?
That is their taunt who say they know us well.
Then let us like true merchants to our trade;
What wares has God to sell?

A world at liberty, a path made clear
For steadfast justice and enduring peace,
Nations released forever from the fear
Of evil days like these.

A sound investment! but—the price is high. . . .
Long hoarded wealth in ruin, flame and steel,
Death lurking in the sea and in the sky—
What say you? Shall we deal?

We take thy bargain, Master of the Mart,
Though we may flinch, we cannot turn away.
Send thy resistless fire upon our heart
And make us strong to pay!

Amelia Josephine Burr was born in New York in 1878 and received her education at Hunter College. She lives at Englewood, New Jersey. Among her publications are "The Point of Life and Plays in the Market-Place," "Afterglow," "The Roadside Fire," "In Deep Places," "Life and Living," "A Dealer in Empires," and has edited "Sylvander and Clarinda," and "The Love Letters of Robert Burns and Agnes McLehose."

Edna St. Vincent Millay

"Renascence," written at the age of nineteen, brought the name of Edna St. Vincent Millay to the

fore as one to be considered in contemporary poetry. Although Miss Millay lives in New York, her serially published "Figs from Thistles" give her an air of being a later Elizabethan poet rather than a modern. "The Faithful Lover" is a worth-while example of Miss Millay's writing:

Oh, think not I am faithful to a vow!
  Faithless am I save to Love's self alone.
Were you not lovely I would leave you now:
  After the feet of beauty fly my own.
Were you not still my hunger's rarest food,
  And water ever to my wildest thirst,
I would desert you,—think not but I would!—
  And seek another as I sought you first.

But you are mobile as the veering air,
  And all your charms more changeful than the tide;
Wherefore to be inconstant is no care:
  I have but to continue at your side.
So wanton, light and false, my love, are you,
I am most faithless when I most am true.

There is a rare whimsical quality and a true lyric sense in the poems of Miss Millay. Witness "The Penitent," from Harriet Monroe's *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse:*

I had a little Sorrow,
  Born of a little Sin,
I found a room all damp with gloom
  And shut us all within;
And, "Little Sorrow, weep," said I,
"And, Little Sin, pray God to die,

And I upon the floor will lie
  And think how bad I've been!"

Alas for pious planning—
  It mattered not a whit!
As far as gloom went in that room,
  The lamp might have been lit!
My little Sorrow would not weep,
My little Sin would go to sleep—
To save my soul I could not keep
  My graceless mind on it!

So up I got in anger,
  And took a book I had,
And put a ribbon on my hair
  To please a passing lad.
And, "One thing there's no getting by—
I've been a wicked girl," said I;
"But if I can't be sorry, why,
  I might as well be glad!"

Lizette Woodworth Reese

Lizette Woodworth Reese, a true voice in our American poetry, and admired greatly by Mr. H. L. Mencken, is represented in the Braithwaite "Anthology of Magazine Verse" (1917) with the following poem reprinted from *The Sonnet:*

ARRAIGNMENT

What wage, what guerdon, Life, asked I of you?
  Brooches; old houses; yellow trees in fall;
  A gust of daffodils by a gray wall;
Books; small lads' laughter; song at drip of dew?
Or said I, "Make me April. I would go,

Night-long, day-long, down the gay little grass,
And therein see myself as in a glass;
There is none other weather I would know?"
Content was I to live like any flower,
Sweetly and humbly; dream each season round
The blossomy things that serve a girl for bread,
Inviolate against the bitter hour.
You poured my dreams like water on the ground:
I think it would be best if I were dead.

Lizette Woodworth Reese was born in Baltimore County, Maryland, in 1856, and was educated in Baltimore. Teacher by profession, she has found time to publish four books of verse which have endeared her to many discerning contemporaries of good poetry. "A Branch of May," "A Handful of Lavender," "A Quiet Road," and "A Wayside Lute" are the titles of her books. Her home is in Baltimore.

Benjamin R. C. Low

Benjamin R. C. Low's tribute to Alan Seeger in "These United States" will stand out as one of the most striking war poems produced by an American poet of today. Stately in its swing, international in its thought and feeling, this stirring poem concludes as follows:

Unrest, like mist, grows ghostlier, it seems
The Thinker questions. . . . Travail. Fire and dreams.
Dark overhead the clouds of Europe blow,
Heat-lightning-lit, dull, ominous and low.
Not yet, not yet the hour, but, tryst to keep,
A spirit moves abroad upon the deep

And will be stirring soon. And will be sung,
Soon, to a clarion of nobler tongue
Than inks on ticker-tapes or glibly reads
From pompous records of parochial greeds
Promulgate for the People. . . . Midnight blue,
Stars of these States a-shining through,
The dawn awaited. Dreaming, peaks and spires;—
The house still locked and dreaming. Dreams—and fires.

Thou whose full time both buds and stars await;—
On the curved cup of destiny whose hold
Permits no bubble world its concave gold
Too buoyant to relinquish; at whose gate
Love takes her lantern and goes out to Hate,
Bending above the battle's bleeding mould;
Our country thou in fire and dreams enfold—
In forest freshness, her, thy consecrate.
There must be some strange beauty hid in her,
With withes uncut by sharp awakening sword;
Some precious gift not veined, some truth of power
Thou art maturing, great artificer.
Fools we, and blind; impatient of an hour;
But make her worthy, for we love her, Lord!

This poem originally appeared in *The Boston Transcript* and was afterwards used by William Stanley Braithwaite in his "Anthology of Magazine Verse" of 1917.

Mr. Low was born at Fair Haven, Mass., on June 22, 1880. Following his education at Yale and Harvard he entered the practice of law but since the war has been a Captain in the Ordnance, U. S. R., at Washington, D. C. His home is in Brooklyn, New York.

Mr. Low has published the following volumes of verse: "The Sailor Who Has Sailed, and Other Poems," "A Wand, and Strings, and other Poems," and "The House That Was, and Other Poems."

Harold Cook

There are a number of sincere young poets writing in the United States to-day, some of whose work is just beginning to be recognized by publishers of magazines.

Foremost among these is Harold Cook, twenty-one years old, whose life has been spent in school and college, intercepted by a season with a stock company, until the war.

"I left Union College before graduation to join up. That is all——" he recently said. And now he is with the U. S. Army Base Hospital, Southern General Hospital, in Portsmouth, England.

"The New Song" of this young poet recently appeared in *The Smart Set*:

Of old she mused about the winds
That pass with whisperings of leaves,
Of little kindred in the grass
And swallows moving in the eaves.

And she would look with wonder eyes
Upon the bursting of a dawn,
Or draw the curtain of the room
To watch a moon above the lawn.

Ah, but now has Love come
With all dawn's beauty in his eyes,

With mysteries of things that lie
Within the roofs of paradise.

And now her song is of his hair,
That it is like a golden sun,
That his arms are a little house
After a sullen day is done.

CHAPTER XVIII

LOUIS V. LEDOUX, JOHN G. NEIHARDT, GEORGE EDWARD WOODBERRY, JAMES BRANCH CABELL

Louis V. Ledoux

Conspicuous among the few purely classic poets whom American literature has produced is Louis Vernon Ledoux. There is Hellenic beauty in his lines, and a formal richness, simplicity and sustained interest.

"Yzdra," a tragedy of 326 B. C., sustains one's interest throughout. This is one of the best of Mr. Ledoux's works, filled with such striking lines as

> "Yea, that were good; to live one perfect hour,
> Then fall like stars while all men stand amazed."

and

> "The audience I craved this afternoon
> Must now be held, so many silken hours
> Have slipped unfelt between our wayward fingers."

Louis Vernon Ledoux was born in New York on June 6, 1880. He was graduated from Columbia University in 1902, and married to Jeanne Logan of

Yonkers, New York, in 1907. He makes his home at Cornwall on the Hudson. Mr. Ledoux's works include "Songs From the Silent Land," "The Soul's Progress," "The Shadow of Etna," "The Story of Eleusis," and "George Edward Woodberry, a Study of His Poetry."

John G. Neihardt

A distinctive narrative poem is John G. Neihardt's "The Song of Hugh Glass," graphic in color, finely presented, warm with such pictures as

> "It was the hour when cattle straggle home.
> Across the clearing in a hush of sleep
> They saunter, lowing; loiter belly-deep
> Amid the lush grass by the meadow stream.
> How like the sound of water in a dream
> The intermittent tinkle of yon bell.
> A windlass creaks contentment from a well,
> And cool deeps gurgle as the bucket sinks.
> Now blowing at the trough the plow-team drinks;
> The shaken harness rattles. Sleepy quails
> Call far. The warm milk hisses in the pails
> There in the dusky barn-lot. Crickets cry.
> The meadow twinkles with the glowing fly.
> One hears the horses munching at their oats.
> The green grows black. A veil of slumber floats
> Across the haunts of home enamored men."

John G. Neihardt was born in Sharpesburg, Illinois on June 8, 1881. He was educated at the Nebraska Normal College, and at the University of Nebraska. His marriage to Mona Martinson, a sculptress, took place on November 29, 1908.

Neihardt lived among the Omaha Indians for six years, in order that he might study their characteristics and learn their legends.

He is the author of "The Divine Enchantment," "The Lonesome Trail," "A Bundle of Myrrh," "Man Song," "The River and I," "The Dawn-Builder," "The Stranger at the Gate," "Death of Agrippina," "Life's Lure," "The Song of Hugh Glass," "The Quest," and "The Song of Three Friends."

George Edward Woodberry

Thoughtful, philosophical, cultivated, are the adjectives employed by Louis V. Ledoux in describing the poetry of George Edward Woodberry, who sits in high place among the modern New England poets.

"The Flight and Other Poems" is a collection of about fifty of his more recent pieces. It was published in 1914, and here is "a poignant realization of absolute equality and brotherhood of man." Many of these record a passionate search within the soul for satisfaction, as may be seen in these lines:

"We sit in our burning spheres
Illimitably hung;
By the speed of light we measure the years
On purple ether flung;
Without a shadow time appears,
A calendar of echoing lights
That flame and dusk from depths and heights,
And all our years are young.

We gaze on the far flood flowing
Unimaginably free,

Multitudinous, mystical, glowing,
But all we do not see;
And a rapture is all our knowing,
That on fiery nerves comes stealing,
An intimate revealing
That all is yet to be."

George Edward Woodberry was born at Beverly, Mass., May 12, 1855. He holds degrees from Harvard, Amherst and Western Reserve, and is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the American Academy of Arts and Letters. His works include the following, both prose and poetry, volumes: "History of Wood Engraving," "Edgar Allan Poe," "Studies in Letters and Life," "The North Shore Watch," "The Heart of Man," "Wild Eden," "Makers of Literature," "Nathaniel Hawthorne," "America in Literature," "Great Writers," "The Life of Edgar Allan Poe," "The Inspiration of Poetry," "Poems," "Ralph Waldo Emerson," "The Appreciation of Literature," "The Torch," "Wendell Phillips," "A Day at Castrogiovanni," "The Kingdom of All-Souls," "Two Phases of Criticism," "North Africa and the Desert," "The Flight," "Shakespeare," "The Ideal Passion."

Mr. Woodberry makes his home in Beverly, Mass.

James Branch Cabell

Too few people know that there is an American writer who is called James Branch Cabell. And even fewer have heard of Mr. Cabell's name where American poets are mentioned. But if you love the good

things in books do not delay in crossing swords with Cabell. Just as Mr. Cabell has written some of the finest prose of our day, and without doubt for many days to come, so has this able essayist, novelist and at all times inimitable satirist, delivered himself of poems well worth consideration in any comprehensive study or presentation of contemporary American poets.

Under the title of "From the Hidden Way," Mr. Cabell offered in 1916 what he chose to call "seventy-five adaptions in verse." They prove that Mr. Cabell is not alone an essayist of parts. There is charm to his poems that lures one back to them again and again and beside which some of the so-called verse of more popular present-day poets becomes fair nursery-rhyme drivel.

Cabell's poems are at times sheer romance, but always done with such able knowledge of values that not once do they descend to the level of the trite or commonplace. They cause an intake of the breath upon first reading and the question arises, "How can lines like these be born in such an age as this?" As Cabell inscribes the title page of "From the Hidden Way":

> "Tell me now in what hidden way is
> Lady Flora, the lovely Roman?
> Where's Hipparchia? where is Thaïs?"

For this vein of romance read "Villon Quits France." It begins:

> "We hang tomorrow, then? That doom is fit
> For most of us, I think. Yet, harkee, friend,

I have a ballad here which I have writ
Of us and our high ending. Pray you, send
The scrawl to Cayeux, bidding him commend
François to grace. Old Colin loves me well,
For no good reason, save it so befell
We two were young together. . . . When I am hung,
Colin will weep—and then will laugh, and tell
How many pranks we played when we were young."

Again Cabell the romanticist is found in his "Jaunts from Stratford." The following he calls "In Verona":

"I had not thought the house of Capulet
Might boast a daughter of such colorful grace
As this whole-hearted girl, with flower-soft face
Round which the glory of her hair is set
Like some great golden halo;—and, as yet,
Love is to her a word that, spoken, spurs
Wonder alone, since love administers
In nothing to the mirth of Juliet."

Quite different in feeling are these plaintive notes that conclude "One End of Love." The meaning is impaired by deletion but the lines are nigh perfect in their own beauty:

"And we ride homeward now, and I
Ride moodily: my palfrey jogs
Along a rock-strewn way the moon
Lights up for us; yonder the bogs
Are curdled with thin ice; the trees
Are naked; from the barren wold
The wind comes like a blade aslant
Across a world grown very old."

Here in Cabell's book of poems one may find companionship for almost any mood. He spreads May wine before you:

"For, at best the merry Maytime
Is a very fleeting playtime;—
Why, then, waste an hour there of?"

And the

"Swift sweet ripple of the April rain,
Running about the world to waken love."

From his store come Nature's magic at twenty years, at twenty-five, at thirty; the joys of living and of love; twilight thoughts, "Ave, Maria, que l'amour Divine inspire"; less satire than in his prose writings, a many sided Cabell interesting, as always, in anything to which he puts his talents.

The Los Angeles Sunday Times contributes the following brief biography of Mr. Cabell:

"James Branch Cabell—'Mr. Cabell of Virginia,' as H. L. Mencken calls him in an appreciative account of his work—has been writing for the past fifteen years, and yet there is perhaps no American author of genius whose life and books are so little known. A literary creed that persistently emphasizes the virtues of individuality and independence, combined with artistry of a very high order, are not the things to assure a writer a place in the sun of popularity. Nevertheless, it is more than a mere guess to say that in *Beyond Life* Mr. Cabell has produced a book which will attract very wide attention and

introduce him to many who in the past have regarded him, if at all, as a writer of attractive but unimportant historical tales.

"Mr. Cabell was born in Richmond, Va., in 1879, the son of a distinguished Southern family. His early education was received there, and in 1898 he graduated from the College of William and Mary, in which he had also been an under-graduate instructor in French and Greek. Followed a period of journalism, first on *The Richmond Times,* then from 1899 to 1901 on *The New York Herald;* finally, again in Virginia, on the city staff of *The Richmond News.* But during all this time Mr. Cabell was steadily working out his own literary and artistic ideals: abandoning the newspaper game in 1902 he entered upon a career of magazine writing, which in eight years saw the production of some sixty short stories, various translations, verses, essays, historical and genealogical studies. Travels in France, England and Ireland were combined with such prosaic things as coal mining in West Virginia and dry historical research to sharpen the talent of the man whose writings were already showing the artistic promise so richly fulfilled in 'The Rivet in Grandfather's Neck,' 'The Certain Hour,' 'The Cream of the Jest' and 'Beyond Life.'

"Since his marriage in 1913 Mr. Cabell has lived at his home, Dumbarton Grange, Dumbarton, Va. There, although a figure of some importance in the social and intellectual life of the country, Mr. Cabell infinitely prefers to follow the dream of his curiously graceful and appealing art."

CHAPTER XIX

EDITH MATILDA THOMAS, CORINNE ROOSEVELT ROBINSON, AGNES LEE, MARY CAROLYN DAVIES, THEODOSIA GARRISON, HELEN GRAY CONE, BABETTE DEUTSCH.

Edith Matilda Thomas

It was the interest of Mrs. Helen Jackson that acted as a spur to the imaginative genius of Edith Matilda Thomas and which brought about the development of a poet whose place is firm and to the fore among the truest living poets in our English language.

Edith Thomas was born at Chatham, Ohio, on August 12, 1854, and educated at the Geneva, Ohio, Normal Institute. She had written only a few things for publication until her meeting in 1881 with Mrs. Jackson, who immediately showed a warm interest in Miss Thomas' poems, and encouraged her to spread the beauty of her poems to a larger audience by writing for the public. Alternating between strength and delicacy of poem structure, a veritable Rodin of verse, Miss Thomas came into immediate favor with her large public. She has continued to write since that time, but in recent years ill health has made the yielding of her poetic output too small.

The contrasting qualities in Miss Thomas' style will be seen in the following poems:

IF STILL THEY LIVE

If still they live, whom touch nor sight
  Nor any subtlest sense can prove,
Though dwelling past our day and night,
  At farthest star's remove,—

Oh, not because these skies they change
  For upper keeps of sky unknown,
Shall that which made them ours grow strange,
  For spirit holds its own;

Whether it pace this earth around,
  Or cross, with printless, buoyant feet,
The unreverberant Profound
  That hath no name nor mete.

TELL ME

Tell me, is there sovereign cure
  For heart-ache, heart-ache,—
Cordial quick and potion sure,
  For heart-ache, heart-ache?

Fret thou not. If all else fail
  For heart-ache, heart-ache,
One thing surely will avail,—
  That's heart-break, heart-break!

In "The Betrayal of the Rose" is portrayed an exquisite poetry picture which shows in full measure the talents of Miss Thomas:

A white rose had a sorrow—
  And a strange sorrow!

For her sisters they had none,
As they all sat around her
  Each on her feudal throne.
    A strange sorrow
For one with no tomorrow,
No yesterday, to call her own,
    But only today.

A white rose had a sorrow—
  And a sweet sorrow!
She had locked it in her breast
  Save that one outer petal,
  Less guarded than the rest
    (Oh, fond sorrow!)
  From the red rose did borrow
Blushes, and the truth confessed
  In the red rose's way!

Since 1888 Miss Thomas has made her home in New York. Her poems are found chiefly in the following volumes and from time to time in the pages of *The New York Sun:* "A New Year's Mask," "Lyrics and Sonnets," "The Inverted Torch," "Fair Shadow Land," "In the Young World," "A Winter Swallow and Other Verse," "The Round Year," "The Dancers," "Cassia and Other Verse," "The Children of Christmas," "The Guest at the Gate," "The White Messenger" and "The Flower from the Ashes."

Corinne Roosevelt Robinson

"My early love of poetry was much encouraged by my father, Theodore Roosevelt, Sr.," writes Corinne

Roosevelt Robinson, whose present day poetry is so strongly marked with the charm of the beautiful.

"He used to read a great deal with me, and was very fond of having me read to him, and I have now the little volume of the series called 'Little Classics' which we took when we went on some long lovely drive at Oyster Bay when we lived there as children. We would picnic in some remote spot, and then bring out the little volume and read aloud to each other. When I was about ten or eleven, my parents were abroad and I was put in a German family in Dresden to learn German, and I think my agony of home sickness was the cause of my first effort in rhyme, called 'The Lament of an American Child in a German Family.' Later, at the age of twelve or thirteen, a number of young girls and myself formed a club for which we wrote and I think our efforts gave us facility—I always wrote verses for the club. I never thought of publishing till about 1910, when a friend who was reading a poem I had written, 'The Call of the Brotherhood,' asked me why I had never published. She finally persuaded me to send that poem and a sonnet called 'Awakening' to Scribner's. I refused to affix my name, as I felt that being the sister of ex-President Roosevelt, that might insensibly have some weight with a publisher, and I did not wish my poems published at all unless on their own merit. They were both accepted, and later as Mr. Scribner wished the name of the author, I was willing to give it.

"The following summer Mr. Scribner asked me if I would like to collect my things, and have them published in book form. This I did and Scribner's

published my first volume. 'The Call of Brotherhood' in October, 1912, and the second volume, 'One Woman to Another' in 1914 and now 'Service and Sacrifice' in 1919."

"Corinne Roosevelt Robinson's latest volume is packed with good things," writes Charles Hanson Towne in *The Bookman*. "The sonnets are extraordinarily fine. 'We Who Have Loved' is the perfection of that difficult form; and the poems on her brother, Theodore Roosevelt, are not mere lines written on the occasion of his death, but real poetry gushing from a bereaved heart. Let me quote the two concluding stanzas from one of the poems:

> I loved you for the radiant zest,
> The thrill and glamour that you gave
> To each glad hour that we could save
> And garner from Time's grim behest.
>
> I loved you for your loving ways,—
> And just because I loved them so,
> And now have lost them,—thus I know
> I must go softly all my days!

"In her nature poems Mrs. Robinson becomes the sympathetic interpreter. So simple a song as 'The Path That Leads Nowhere' will find a place in many anthologies. The last stanza is enough to give the feeling of the whole poem:

> All the ways that lead to Somewhere
> Echo with the hurrying feet
> Of the struggling and the striving,
> But the way I find so sweet

Bids me dream and bids me linger,
Joy and Beauty are its goal,—
On the path that leads to Nowhere
I have sometimes found my soul!

"There are many lighter pieces that deserve mention, too, and the whole collection will stand the test of time."

Agnes Lee

Agnes Lee is the pen name of Mrs. Otto Freer who was born in Chicago. Her father, William H. Rand, was a New Englander, as was also her mother. Her childhood was spent mostly in Vevey, Switzerland, but for many years her home has been in Boston, Massachusetts. As a girl she read poetry, and wrote a slender volume of what her proud friends acclaimed to be *poems,* and which were printed privately. Miss Lee says of these: "There was some good thought, but they were pitifully poor as to expression, and I do not like to think of them. I was not yet ready to write."

While in Boston Miss Lee wrote verses for children that appeared in *St. Nicholas* and other juvenile periodicals, and these were gathered together and published by Copeland and Day under the title of "The Round Rabbit." Then work of a more serious sort from her pen began to appear in magazines. She had the usual disappointments and encouragements. It was Mr. David Monro, of *The North American Review,* who gave Miss Lee her start. At a time when *The Review* published little poetry, Mr. Monro became

interested in her writings and many of her poems appeared in that periodical under his editorship. In 1910 came her book of poems, "The Border of the Lake," and in 1914 "The Sharing."

Agnes Lee is a frequent contributor to *The Poetry Magazine* and is a member of the Poetry Society of America.

Here is a poet who declares that she read the poets perfunctorily during school years and her real love of the art was fostered in her home. Miss Lee and her brothers and sisters were made to realize the best things in poetry and music, to learn the psalms by heart and to recite them of a Sunday.

When asked *how* she writes, Agnes Lee declares that she hardly knows herself. She rarely undertakes to write a poem in a certain meter. Arising thoughts seem to take their own forms. "A Statue in a Garden" is a good example:

I was a goddess ere the marble found me.
  Wind, wind, delay not,
Waft my spirit where the laurel crowned me!
  Will the wind stay not?

Then tarry, tarry, listen, little swallow,—
  An old marvel feeds me:
I lay upon the bosom of Apollo!
  Not a bird heeds me.

For here the days are alien. O, to waken
  Mine, mine, with calling!
But on my shoulders bare, like hopes forsaken,
  The dead leaves are falling.

The sky is gray and full of unshed weeping,
As dim down the garden
I wait and watch the early autumn sweeping.
The stalks fade and harden.

The souls of all the flowers afar have rallied.
The trees, gaunt, appalling,
Attest the gloom, and on my shoulders pallid
The dead leaves are falling.

Miss Lee speaks earnestly and simply, avoiding the "literary" expression. She takes great delight in the splendid writings of many of our contemporary poets and says that she never considered herself *in the race,* for she writes only intermittently, and her poems are in the utterance in which she is the most at home. Much of her writing is of life as she sees it about her, much of it is abstract thought.

Miss Lee loves animals and birds. She has made quite a study of birds. "A Nesting Linnet" has won her honorable mention, but has not yet been published in a book. It is quoted (see Appendix) because, though it has appeared in magazine form, it is less known than much of Agnes Lee's work in the anthologies.

Mary Carolyn Davies

Iron left in the rain
And fog and dew
With rust is covered.—Pain
Rusts into beauty, too.

I know full well that this is so:
—I had a heartbreak long ago.

If Mary Carolyn Davies had written only one poem and that poem was made up of these lines she chooses to call "Rust," it would entitle her to a place of high merit among our contemporary American poets. Surely here is a poem of rare imagination and feeling —one that the estimable Ralph Hodgson might be proud to claim as his own.

Mary Carolyn Davies writes with a natural swing, never with any sort of affected style but ever charming with a certain naïveté as may be seen in such lines as:

What is love?
Love is when you touch me;
Love is a noise of stars singing as they march.

Miss Marguerite Wilkinson in "The Contemporary Poets," a series of critical articles that appeared in *The Editor,* makes the following interesting comments on Mary Carolyn Davies and her work.

"Mary Carolyn Davies has been called, appropriate enough, the poet of girlhood, not because she writes about girls—although she does that sometimes—but because she has a girl's way of feeling life. Her poetry is full of innocent remarks, eager, impulsive, wondering outcries, whimsies half childlike, half womanly. . . . Captious critics may demand of her a greater conciseness, more symmetry of design, greater depth of feeling. But wild flowers do not grow on trellises, and I for one am content to like her poetry for what it is. When I read it I sometimes think of those shy, plucky, imperfect, but thoroughly delightful little blossoms that grow in the rocks of high mountains."

Mr. William Stanley Braithwaite in a critique *(Boston Evening Transcript)* on "The Drums In Our Street," Miss Davies' first book, writes: "I like very much this little poem by Miss Davies on 'Peace,' and now that peace has come let each one judge whether as in all true poets there is that vision in her art which we call prophecy:

When all the war is made and done,
  And in our town I stand once more,
From other homes I'll seek out one
  And knock upon its door.

And I will wait there patiently
  Until I hear your step, and then
As the worn door swings back, will see
  Your face look out again.

And that is all peace means to me—
  Some day to walk up past the store,
And past the corner chestnut tree,
  And knock upon your door.

"In Miss Davies first book she shows the gift of clear, simple and singing lines giving expression to wistful and tender moods. So good a start may well promise deepening and broadening, and in her next book move with us with the force as well as the aspect of spirit."

Mary Carolyn Davies went to school in Oregon and to college in California and at New York University. Her first book of poems "The Drums In Our Street," was brought out by Macmillan in September, 1918, and

her first play was published the same month. Another book of poems is under way and a book of child verse, called "A Little Freckled Person," will soon make its appearance.

Theodosia Garrison

Like a declaration of faith from a long suffering but indomitable people, strong with the strength of righteous cause and sure of moral victory is Theodosia Garrison's "April 2nd":

We have been patient—and they named us weak;
We have been silent—and they judged us meek.
Now, in the much-abused, high name of God
We speak.

Oh, not with faltering or uncertain tone—
With chosen words we make our meaning known,
That like a great wind from the West shall shake
The double throne.

Our colors flame upon the topmost mast,—
We lift the glove so arrogantly cast,
And in the much-abused, high name of God
We speak at last.

At the author's request for biographical data, the following characteristic letter was received from Miss Garrison:

"I was born in Newark, N. J., in November, 1874, the daughter of one Silas Wright Pickering. Some twenty-two years after I married Joseph Garrison

and after his death married (in 1911) Frederic James Faulks of Elizabeth, N. J. In the winter we live in Elizabeth and in the summer at this little place (Glenside, Murray Hill, N. J.), in the hills. I have written a great deal of wholly unnecessary verse ever since I could hold a pen and a number of short stories that only my enemies would recall. I have three books of verse: 'The Joy of Life' (Kennerly, 1909), 'The Earth Cry' (Kennerly, 1910) and 'The Dreamers,' published by Doran in 1917 which is a feeble collection gotten up in a hurry and showing it. And this, Mr. Cook, is the record of a blameless life!"

Helen Gray Cone

"My life has been quite uneventful," writes Helen Gray Cone. "I was born in New York City on the 8th of March, 1859. I come of a stock which is British-American, as far as I know. (The Cones appeared in New England in the seventeenth century.) Half of my life has been lived in connection with Hunter College, as student, teacher of English Literature, and since 1899, Professor of English. I love teaching—that is, the kind of teaching I have had to do, the reverent interpretation of the beauty in literature. I love young people, and I think contact with them has kept me young. But in a sense all of us who are really alive are young today: we were born in 1914.

"Nothing in my quiet life has given me more pleasure than the writing of 'A Chant of Love for England' in 1914, and the general response to that poem,

when published in *The Atlantic* in 1915. The 'Hymn of Hate' struck lovers of England like a gauntlet of challenge. I am glad that my instinctive reply (which I feel to be but a single utterance expressive of the minds of many) was an expression, not of hate, but of love. 'The Chant' is the title poem of a collection published in 1915 by J. M. Dent in England and Canada and E. P. Dutton and Company in New York. The collection, which was made for England at the instance of Mr. Dent, contains the best material which I could hurriedly select from three former volumes: *Oberon and Puck, Verses Grave and Gay,* 1885; *The Ride to the Lady,* 1891, and *Soldiers of the Light,* 1911.

"A new volume, *The Coat Without a Seam,* composed mainly of poems written since 1914, is just about to be published by E. P. Dutton & Co."

One of Miss Cone's sonnets that ably bears witness to her genius is "Happy Country," selected by Mr. Fisher for publication in "The Sonnet":

Here by the bright blue creek the good ships lie
A-building, and the hammers beat and beat,
And the wood-smell is pleasant in the heat;
The strong ribs curve against the marsh and sky.
Here the old men are mowing in the sun,
And the hay-sweetness blends with the wild-rose;
At the field's edge the scarlet lily glows;
The great clouds sail, and the swift shadows run,
And the broad undulant meadows gloom and smile;
Over the russet red-top warm winds pass,
The swallow swoops and swerves, the cattle stand
In the cool of shallow brooks—and all the while

Peace basks asleep, she dreams of some sad land
Leagues over sea, where youth is mown as grass.

Babette Deutsch

"The outstanding feature in the work of this young poet," writes a critic in *The Evening Post* (New York), "is its strange combination of sharp intensity and an even sharper sensitivity. Her emotional convictions not only splash vivid color over her poems, they tighten her lines, impel her figures and perform technical delicacies which are ordinarily quite beyond their power. In fact, when Miss Deutsch depends on technique alone or relies upon skill in the fashioning of a literary *étude* she is scarcely successful. This poetry, at its best, is essentially ardent, nervous, high-spirited, independent. Independent, incidentally, of form, 'Banners' ranges from the strictest of sonnets to the loosest *vers libre;* Miss Deutsch says what she has to say as provocatively and without ostentation in restrained lyrics as in rhymed 'voluntaries.' The title poem is possibly the most stirring piece in the collection, but 'The Challenger,' and 'Marbles,' are, each in its own manner, equally vigorous. Her pictures of Isadora Duncan's girl dancers are similarly distinguished. Excellent in its warm precision is this one, entitled

ANNA

Are there holier ones
Than these?
Is there a more fit altar for worship?
Limbs of a young Aphrodite;

The virgin torso;
Feet firmly planted,
Or lifted only in rhythm,
Beating the ground like the clear
Round golden notes of the cymbal;
Fingers that draw the heart
Like a flute that calls in the twilight;
Brows serious,
Serene,
Hair wind-blown and dark,
Lips that are parted slightly,
A wondering god's;
But this is a maiden. . . .
This is the flying torch
For the maternal temple.

"Were there space I should like to quote 'The Death of a Child' in its splendid entirety, or 'Distance,' or some of the sonnets, particularly 'The Undelivered,' in spite of its atrocious line: 'Safe in sleep's umber envelope of peace.'

"Instead of these I will reprint an example of Miss Deutsch's surety of touch in the short, free-rhymed verse:

SONGS

I would make songs for you:
Of slow suns weighing
Through pale mist to the river, overlaying
Gold upon silver tissue; or the hush
Of winter twilight when the bushes quiver
Blooming with birds;
Of the easy snow;
Of patient streets, or the theatric glow

Of lamps on crowding faces in the night;
Of sudden gay encounters without words;
Of sorrow quiet in a huddled fight;
Of the release of April winds;
Of death,
That is a stillness without peace—
Like love, wherefor I am so dumb to you."

Miss Deutsch took her degree from Barnard in 1917; then did free-lancing for a while and was assistant to the managing editor of *The Political Science Quarterly,* and spent the winter of 1918 doing bibliographical work for Dr. Thorstein Veblen at the New School for Social Research. She also wrote review articles for such papers as *The Dial, The Nation,* etc. George Doran and Company brought out "Banners," her first volume of verse this spring.

CHAPTER XX

CLINTON SCOLLARD, SCUDDER MIDDLETON, DANA BURNET, HANIEL LONG, WILLIAM ALEXANDER PERCY, ROBERT UNDERWOOD JOHNSON, JAMES OPPENHEIM, WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT, STEPHEN VINCENT BENÉT.

Clinton Scollard

Clinton Scollard was born in Clinton, New York, September 18, 1860, of Irish-English ancestry, with French strain. His great-grandmother (Elisabeth Ross Davidson) was one of the maidens who helped Betsy Ross make the first American flag, and one of his ancestors was at "the Boston Tea-party."

Mr. Scollard was graduated from Hamilton College with the class of 1881 and was later a student at Harvard and at Cambridge, England. He has traveled widely through Italy, Greece, Asia Minor, Syria and Egypt, but previous to this time he was for eight years connected with the English department of Hamilton College as instructor and professor and received from that institution the degrees of B.A., M.A., and L.H.D.

Mr. Scollard may have inherited a taste for poetics from his maternal grandmother who was somewhat of a poet in her day. She was a correspondent of William Cullen Bryant, and it was through a suggestion

of hers that Bryant came to write one of his best known later poems.

It would be difficult to find a more understanding critique of Mr. Scollard's place in contemporary poetry than in the following extract made from *Current Opinion:*

"All who write easily are tempted to write carelessly. Mr. Clinton Scollard has resisted this temptation; he has produced a large amount of verse, but he is, and always has been, a scrupulous artist. Therefore his 'Poems,' recently published by Houghton Mifflin Company, form a volume which those who have the interest of American letters at heart may regard with considerable satisfaction. The charming little books of verse which this poet has published from year to year have been gratefully received, but from none of them could his real worth be definitely determined. This collected edition contains what he considers the best of his works, and it can not fail to establish yet more firmly his already prominent position among the foremost writers of our time.

"He has imagination, sympathy, and the power to combine words to make things rich in music and color. Here are four stanzas that hold the very soul of the Orient:

AS I CAME DOWN FROM LEBANON

As I came down from Lebanon,
Came winding, wandering slowly down
Through mountain passes bleak and brown,
The cloudless day was well-nigh done.
The city, like an opal, set

In emerald, showed each minaret
Afire with radiant beams of sun.
And glistened orange, fig, and lime
Where song-birds made melodious chime,
As I came down from Lebanon.

As I came down from Lebanon,
Like lava in the dying glow,
Through olive-orchards far below
I saw the murmuring river run,
And 'neath the wall upon the sand
Swart sheiks from distant Samarkand
With precious spices they had won,
Lay long and languidly in wait
Till they might pass the guarded gate.
As I came down from Lebanon.

As I came down from Lebanon,
I saw strange men from lands afar
In mosque and square and gay bazaar—
The Magi that the Moslem shun,
The grave Effendi from Stamboul
Who sherbet sipped in corners cool;
And, from the balconies o'erun
With roses, gleamed the eyes of those
Who dwell in still seraglios,
As I came down from Lebanon.

As I came down from Lebanon,
The flaming flower of daytime died,
And Night, arrayed as is a bride
Of some great king in garments spun
Of purple and the finest gold,
Outbloomed in glories manifold!
Until the moon above the dun

And darkening desert, void of shade,
Shone like a keen Damascus blade,
As I came down from Lebanon!

"Here is a poem that will have a home in many an anthology and (what is more important) in many a scrap-book."

In 1900 Mr. Scollard was the Phi Beta Kappa poet at Harvard. He was the poet of the Cooperstown Centennial in 1907, of the Hamilton College Centennial in 1912, and joined with Bliss Carman and Percy MacKaye in celebrating the Lake Champlain Tercentenary in 1909.

In 1915 Mr. Scollard published a small volume entitled "The Vale of Shadows" the proceeds of which were donated to the Belgium Relief Fund. Later, following our entrance into the great conflict, he was active as a member of the Vigilantes. Many of the pieces which he contributed to matter sent out by this organization were afterward included in "Let the Flag Wave" and "War Voices and Memories." In addition to poetry, he has published six novels, two books of travel and one of nature sketches, and has also lectured upon poetry.

Mr. Scollard is, at the present time, a resident of New York City.

Scudder Middleton

Mr. Louis Untermeyer passes judgment upon the poetry of Mr. Scudder Middleton in the columns of *The Evening Post* (New York) as follows:

"Mr. Middleton's slender volume following hard upon the heels of his 'Streets and Faces' seems inexcusably thin. The more so since several of the poems in 'The New Day' are taken from the first collection. It would have greatly improved this second gathering (and, incidentally, Mr. Middleton's reputation) if the author had omitted such patent theatricalities as 'Children' and given his readers a few more poems as well conceived and neatly executed as 'The Return,' 'The Sun,' 'The Secret of John Doe.' There is an unnatural pallor about the rest of the volume, a pallor that once would have been considered 'poetic.' But even the ancient Muse will not rise at the old invocations; the spell to compel her must be accompanied by phrases more convincing and less ritualistic than 'the heavenly gift of peace,' 'argent hair,' 'strange and wan,' 'the tents of Araby.' This last phrase emanates doubtless from Middleton's admiration for Ralph Hodgson, whose influence is apparent in the freer and more fantastic poems. One of the simplest of these is worthy of its master:

INTERLUDE

I am not old, but old enough
To know that you are very young,
It might be said I am the leaf,
And you the blossom newly sprung.

So I shall grow a while with you,
And hear the bee and watch the cloud,
Before the dragon on the branch,
The caterpillar, weaves a shroud."

A Boston critic writes:

"Scudder Middleton is one of the rare poets who only write when they have something to say. His poems of 'The New Day' (Macmillan Co.) present a singer contemplative, ardent. One with social vision, and a power of dramatic expression. Let us take lines called 'Finis':

I need you—
Now that is gone.
I cared for you—
Now that is song.
What am I to you,
What are you to me,
Though we live so utterly . . .
Two gibbering gulls that pass at night
Bound for lone aeries underneath the stars."

Mr. Middleton was born in New York City September 9, 1888. He was educated at Columbia University and is now connected with the publishing business. He lives in New York City.

Dana Burnet

While Dana Burnet still finds time for the writing of poems of distinctive merit, the younger poets lost a worthy member of their clan when Mr. Burnet fell victim to the lure of short story writing. The result of this has been that fewer of Mr. Burnet's poems have been brought to the author's attention in the last two years but the few that he has seen assure Mr. Burnet's admirers that his ability to write verse is as much his own as ever.

In reply to the author's request for biographical data Mr. Burnet writes:

"I shall be glad to appear in your book but if I may say so I shall prefer to be represented by my work rather than by biographical data as my life has been devoted chiefly to that work.

"I was born in Avondale, Cincinnati, Ohio, July 3, 1888; was educated—God save the mark!—at the Avondale public school, Woodward High School and later at Cornell University, College of Law. I have a law degree which I have never seen. Graduating from Cornell in 1911 I went to *The New York Evening Sun* as a news reporter. I was connected with *The Sun* for seven years and published a great many of my poems in that paper.

"I have also written a considerable amount of prose, chiefly short stories and two short novels with one or two plays."

The following poem, originally appearing in *Harper's Magazine,* was chosen by Mr. William Stanley Braithwaite for Mr. Burnet's contribution to his Anthology of Magazine Verse for 1917:

TO A LOGICIAN

Cold man, in whom no animating ray
Warms the chill substance of the sculptor's clay;
Grim Reasoner, with problems in your eyes,
Professor, Sage—however do they call you?
Far-seeing Blindman, fame shall yet befall you;
Carve you in stone—that Winter of the wise!—
And set you up in some pale portico
To frown on heaven above, on earth below.

I shall make songs, and give them to the breeze,
And die amid a thousand ecstasies!
I shall be dust, and feel the joyous sting
Of that sweet arrow from the bow of Time
Which men call Spring.
And out of my dead mouth a rose shall come like rhyme!
But you, in your eternal state of snows,
Shall thrill no more to life's resurgent flood,
Nor cast death's laughter into April's rose!
You shall be marble, who were never blood.

Haniel Long

Haniel Long, instructor in poetry at the Carnegie Institute of Technology, has not yet published his first book of poetry. But he has written numberless poems of quality so fine, with lyric sense so highly developed and showing such spiritual feeling that the author counts it among his rare privileges to know the poetry of this man.

Let these lines speak for themselves:

THE HERD BOY

The night I brought the cows home
  Blue mist was in the air,
And in my heart was heaven
  And on my lips a prayer.

I raised my arms above me,
  I stretched them wide apart,
And all the world was pressing
  In beauty on my heart.

The lane led by a river
  Along an ancient wood,
And ancient thoughts came softly
  As with the leaves they should.

I hung the cows with garlands,
  And proud they walked before;
While mother-naked after
  A laurel branch I bore.

Poetry: A Magazine of Verse.

And, without wishing to violate the confidence of such a poet the following lines, each sentence so meaningful, are taken from a personal letter to myself:

"It seems to me that we go through our moods as a dog through cobwebs. But moods are also like areas or continents in our being, of which we may not always be conscious. I think it was William Blake who said we must distinguish between the Real Man and the states of mind through which as a traveller he passes. But it is difficult to know oneself, and personally I don't think the guest amusing."

Haniel Long is doing a powerful work in his poetry classes at Carnegie Institute, but some day he will do a far greater thing when he concentrates, as he will in time, his entire efforts in the creation of his own true poetry.

William Alexander Percy

When the first edition of *Our Poets of Today* was brought out, America was at the height of her activ-

ity in the World War. The result of this was shown in the fact that many of the best poems selected for my study of modern American poets found their theme in the war.

Kilmer and Seeger went—and will not return. And it is proper to mention in the same breath with these, greatest of our own war poets, the name of William Alexander Percy, who entered the line with the 37th Division; was participant in some of the hardest fighting in the Argonne and Flanders and whose service brought his promotion to captaincy of infantry and the Croix de Guerre with two citations.

Prior to Mr. Percy's career as a soldier he was chosen by the discerning William Stanley Braithwaite as one of America's best poets. It would be difficult to find a poem more artistic in construction or finer demonstrating the art of poetic genius than "Overtones":

I heard a bird at break of day
  Sing from the autumn trees
A song so mystical and calm,
  So full of certainties,
No man, I think, could listen long
  Except upon his knees.
Yet this was but a simple bird,
  Alone among dead trees.

The Bellman.

William Alexander Percy was born in Greenville, Miss., on May 14, 1885. He took his bachelor's degree at the University of the South. He studied law at the

Harvard law school and practiced law in Greenville from 1908 to 1915.

It was in 1915 that Mr. Percy published his "Sappho in Leukas and Other Poems."

In 1916 Mr. Percy went to Belgium as a member of the Commission for Relief in Belgium under Mr. Hoover. He returned to America in time to enter the second officers' training camp in Texas, where he obtained his commission as first lieutenant of infantry and was ordered to France in January of 1918.

Mr. Percy is now out of the army and is preparing his second volume of verse for early publication.

Robert Underwood Johnson

In *The Art World* for December, 1916, there appeared an article, "Obstacles to Poetry in America," by Robert Underwood Johnson. And in the face of the general healthy growth in America's poetry output since that time, the following quotation from this article is not without interest.

In commenting on the test of a poet in this article Mr. Johnson writes: "Besides his technique, which is to be inferred from his effects, the poet should be judged—and judged severely—by his range and weight of thought. Does he open any window of imagination upon the world? Has he anything new to offer concerning the main concepts of life—Love, Death, Nature, the Seasons, Beauty, Happiness, Sorrow, Truth, Immortality? In his long poems, has he the sustained sweep of an eagle, or only the broken flight of a lamed pigeon? Does he see any deeper into

the mysteries of life and bring us any accession of hope or truth? What has he to say of such time-worn topics as Friendship, Faith, Patriotism, Ambition, Youth, Poverty? Does he express his own time? or, better, does he express the human nature that is independent of time? And last of all, has he by the union of emotion, melody and imagination an accent of permanence? These are things which criticism, accepting its responsibility, should divine and enforce, so that a discriminating public taste may be formed and directed and become a stimulus and support of the best production."

Mr. Underwood estimates the so-called "modern" school as follows: "The only way to be thoroughly modern or to remain so is to be universal. Had Shakespeare expressed only the sixteenth and a bit of the seventeenth century, his 'three-centuried wit,' as Gilder called it, would not have survived to the present day. It is because he is human and essential and not parochial, either in time, or geography, or intellectual range, because he used his own period as the vaulting-board of his imagination, that he is today the recognized prince of all literature. He opened new windows upon many worlds and taught us to look outside ourselves for light."

And in the face of such declarations, there is more than passing interest in the consideration of Mr. Johnson's following poems:

BROWNING AT ASOLO

This is the loggia Browning loved,
High on the flank of the friendly town;

These are the hills that his keen eye roved,
The green like a cataract leaping down
To the plain that his pen gave new renown.

There to the West what a range of blue!—
The very background Titian drew
To his peerless Loves! O tranquil scene!
Who than thy poet fondlier knew
The peaks and the shore and the lore between?

See! yonder's his Venice—the valiant Spire,
Highest one of the perfect three,
Guarding the others; the Palace choir,
The Temple flashing with opal fire—
Bubble and foam of the sunlit sea.

Yesterday he was part of it all—
Sat here, discerning cloud from snow
In the flush of the Alpine afterglow,
Or mused on the vineyard whose wine-stirred row
Meets in a leafy bacchanal.

Listen a moment—how oft did he!—
To the bells from Fontalto's distant tower
Leading the evening in . . . ah, me!
Here breathes the whole soul of Italy
As one rose breathes with the breath of the bower.

Sighs were meant for an hour like this
When joy is keen as a thrust of pain.
Do you wonder the poet's heart should miss
This touch of rapture in Nature's kiss
And dream of Asolo ever again?

"Part of it yesterday," we moan?
Nay, he is part of it now, no fear.

What most we love we are that alone.
His body lies under the Minster stone,
But the love of the warm heart lingers here.

THE BLOSSOM OF THE SOUL

Thou half-unfolded flower
With fragrance-laden heart,
What is the secret power
That doth thy petals part?
What gave thee most thy hue—
The sunshine or the dew?

Thou wonder-wakened soul!
As Dawn doth steal on Night,
On thee soft Love hath stole.
Thine eye, that blooms with light,
What makes its charm so new—
Its sunshine, or its dew?

Mr. Johnson's published volumes include the following titles: "Saint Gaudens: An Ode, and Other Verse," "Poems of War and Peace," including the Panama Ode, The Corridors of Congress, Poems of the Great War, A Teacher, The Little Room of Dreams, etc., "Italian Rhapsody, and Other Poems of Italy."

Robert Underwood Johnson was born in Washington, January 12, 1853. He was educated at Earlham College, Indiana. He has been associated with *The Century Magazine* since 1873 and was associate editor of this magazine from 1881 to 1909. From November, 1909 to May, 1913, he was editor succeeding Richard Watson Gilder. Mr. Johnson has been conspicuous in

various important national, as well as international, movements such as The National Citizens Commission of the third Hague conference.

James Oppenheim

A familiar in New York literary circles is Mr. James Oppenheim, poet and former editor of *The Seven Arts,* mouthpiece for young radicals that met its untimely death early in the war.

Mr. Oppenheim was born in St. Paul, Minn., May 24, 1882. He did special work at Columbia University and counts to his credit the following books of verse, "Monday Morning and Other Poems," "Songs for the New Age," "War and Laughter," "The Book of Self" and "The Solitary." Of this latter book W. H. C., writing in *The New York Tribune,* says:

"The poems collected in this volume are all written in the *vers libre* that has always been the author's most congenial mode of expression. Occasionally he succumbs to the besetting temptation of this style of composition and lapses into diffuse and empty wordiness. But most of his poems have the good red blood of real thought in them; they are written with genuine fire; and at the same time they show an increasing sense of artistic fineness and polish. The following passage from 'The Sea' is an excellent illustration of Mr. Oppenheim's ability to create sonorous, rolling effects:

All-permeating sea-song,
Music of the fluid blood and the moving spirit, life that
is never silent,

Energy rolling in rhythms, triumphant, desparing, solitary, multitudinous,
Descending, descending song, the impetuous storm-brine, the soothing moon-sheen.
The icy waters that burn, the balm of the equatorial baths,
Wails of the stricken, moans of the dying, shouts of the strugglers,
Dirge and lullaby, bells of the bridal and the burial,—
All within myself, all on the shores of my own body,
The unending song of the planet of my own flesh . . .
The mother forever near me. . . .
The great mother singing to her child. . . .

"There are several other poems in the volume that stand out with arresting excellence. The elegy for Randolph Bourne is a touching and beautiful tribute to a kindred spirit. In 'The Fires of Pittsburgh' the author gives a convincing and realistic word picture of the hum and whir, the unending turmoil and trial of the city. 'Memories of Whitman and Lincoln' is a fine hymn in honor of two of the greatest American democrats. And the poems as a whole, the indifferent as well as the truly excellent, are permeated with a spirit of undimmed, exuberant, youthful idealism that promises well for the author's creative activity in the future."

William Rose Benét

William Rose Benét was born at Fort Hamilton, New York Harbor July 2, 1886, educated at the Albany Academy, Sheffield Scientific School and Yale University. He is assistant editor of *The Century Magazine*.

In a letter from Mr. Charles G. Norris to the author of this book Mr. Norris declares Mr. Benét "one of the most representative of our poets of today and one whose work has been acclaimed by the most discriminating critics in America and England as work of the finest order."

From *Reedy's Mirror* the following poem is taken:

THE ASYLUM

I love my asylum,
My home in the skies,
Splashed with splendid color,
Drenched in dazzling dyes:
Clouds and winds and oceans,
Blue above-below.
I love my asylum. . . .
But the other inmates? *No!*

All in our asylum
Are mad as can be.
I stick my tongue at them.
They stick their tongues at me.
And purple authorities
And gilded bloody gods
All rule in our asylum
With black whips and rods.

And men cry "Alleluia,"
To hop-toads with wings;
And women love poodles;
And all love breaking things,
Love swearing and peering,
Love reptiles and lice. . . .

Yes, in my asylum
It isn't very nice!

But sometimes the windows
Are burst by magic dawns,
And then we see far vistas
Of star-embroidered lawns
Where rational angels
Are laughing like fun.
But, of course, in our asylum
It simply isn't done!

So one wears a crown,
One piles his gold in rows,
One balances a feather
On the end of his nose.
One's a sword-swallower,
One mumbles *"One-two-three."*
And all in our asylum
Are unhappy as can be.

For you see, the whole trouble
(Though we're absolutely mad!)
Is, we fear a strange sensation
We have sometimes had.
So sometimes we huddle close
And clutch at heart and brain.
For I'll tell you what's the trouble;
We're afraid of going—sane!

Stephen Vincent Benét

A graphic narrator—that is what critics have so aptly called Stephen Vincent Benét, whose subtle poetic

word pictures place him among our most distinguished interpreters of narrative poetry.

As Mr. Gordon Ray Young, that well known critic of the California coast, puts it:

"It is very rare to find a poet whose felicity seems peculiar to his longer poems; but this is largely true of Mr. Benét. The very short ones, sonnets and such, are not of the best material, not comparable to 'The Lover in Hell' with its curious ironic twist, 'Winged Man' and 'Portrait of a Boy'—one of which is long.

"And the thing that lifts Mr. Benét from among the commonplace good poets—for many have a technical perfection that his does not exceed—is that behind the wizard richness of the poems, the color and bright phrase are the searching brain and thought of the realistic dramatists. Few words have been more abused than dramatic, and it isn't essentially proper here; but the language is inadequately equipped to define the poet, who is also a realist, and yet does not use the trappings and conventions of realism. Browning was a poet of the kind. Mr. Benét is full of much the same spirit."

From "The Drug Shop or Endymion in Edmonstoun," the foremost poem in Mr. Benét's "Young Adventure," an opium vision in various movements is presented. These lines are from one of the songs:

> Within the lights were yellow
> In drowsy rooms and warm;
> Without, the stabbing lightning
> Shattered across the storm.

Without the great logs crackled,
The drink-horns emptied soon;
Without the black cloaks of the clouds
Strangled the waning moon.

Stephen Vincent Benét was born at Bethlehem, Pa., July 22, 1898 and educated at Summerville Academy Augusta, Ga., and Yale University. He is the author of two books of verse—"Five Men and Pompey" and "The Drug Shop," which was the Yale University prize poem of 1917.

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APPENDIX

In the study of contemporary American poetry it is not without interest to note Miss Amy Lowell's list of works on poetry purporting to represent "as nearly as anything can a definitive list of modern poets and their works" and to observe the decidedly impressive showing made by our native poetry makers.

The poetry of the last half-dozen years has been exhaustively reviewed by Miss Lowell in arriving at her choices. No modern in her opinion essentially worth while has been omitted, whether he writes in the older or the most unfetteredly advanced idiom. . . . The level of excellence set by her own critical conscience has formed the sole criterion of Miss Lowell's acceptance or rejection.

Following is the list:

"Charnel Rose," by Conrad Aiken; "Images," by Richard Aldington; "Merchants From Cathay," by William Rose Benét; "Minna and Myself," by Maxwell Bodenheim; "Old Christmas and Other Kentucky Tales in Verse," by William Aspenwall Bradley; "Poems," by Rupert Brooke; "Grenstone Poems," "The New World," "Songs of the Beloved Stranger," by Witter Bynner; "The Mountain Singer," by Seosamh MacCathmhaoil, (Josep Campbell); "Afternoons in April," by Grace Hazard Conkling; "Sea Garden," by "H. D."; "The Listeners," "Peacock

Pie," by Walter de la Mare; "Poems," by John Drinkwater; "Irradiations," "Goblins and Pagodas," "The Tree of Life," by John Gould Fletcher; "North of Boston," "Mountain Interval," by Robert Frost; "Collected Poems," by Wilfred Wilson Gibson; "Poems," by Ralph Hodgson; "Amores," by D. H. Lawrence; "The Congo," "The Chinese Nightingale," by Vachel Lindsay; "Sword Blades and Poppy Seed," "Men, Women and Ghosts," "Can Grande's Castle," by Amy Lowell; "The Everlasting Mercy," "Salt Water Ballads," "The Story of a Roundhouse," by John Masefield; "Spoon River Anthology," "The Great Valley," by Edgar Lee Masters; "The New Poetry," compiled by Harriet Monroe and Alice Corbin Henderson; "Little Grey Songs From St. Joseph's," by Grace Fallow Norton; "War and Laughter," by James Oppenheim; "Children of the Night," "The Town Down the River," "The Man Against the Sky," by Edwin Arlington Robinson; "Chicago Poems," "Cornhuskers," by Carl Sandburg; "Counter-attack," by Siegfried Sassoon; "The Sad Years," by Dora Sigerson; "Reincarnations," by James Stephens; "Love Poems," "Rivers to the Sea," by Sara Teasdale; "Growing Pains," by Jean Starr Untermeyer; "Challenge," "These Times," by Louis Untermeyer; "Lanterns in Gethsemane," by Willard Wattles; "The Old Road to Paradise," by Margaret Widdemer; "The New Era in American Poetry," by Louis Untermeyer; "Tendencies in Modern American Poetry," by Amy Lowell; "The Advance of English Poetry in the Twentieth Century," by Prof. William Lyon Phelps.

Miss Lowell's latest book "Pictures of the Floating

World" belongs in this list, for from the standard of sheer beauty, modern poetry shows few things more perfect than these Chinese inspired poems.

It is with just national pride that readers of this book may read the following complete poems by American contemporary poets whose work is so significant in a poetry movement international in import. Some of the poets here represented have not been discussed in the book (*Our Poets of Today*) properly, but these selections have been made solely for the beauty of the poems themselves and without thought of the poet's name or fame. Each speaks the heart of its creator in whatever verse form seems best to him.

Some of the sonnets are among the purest modern examples we have of this form of verse and for their reproduction here the author offers his thanks and appreciation to Mr. Mahlon Leonard Fisher, editor of *The Sonnet.*

"The sole aim of *The Sonnet* is to publish poetry so well thought of by its makers that they were willing to place it within strict confines. The brochure will have nothing to say in defense of its name. It will neither attack nor respond to attacks."

REDEMPTION

By Babette Deutsch

Like children wakeful in the night, alert
For some sad sound of the deserted street,

We too discard our toys, and stare, inert,
  At walls of black estrangement and defeat.
We sicken with the sound and smell of war;
  Among our best, devouring fingers thrust;
And life is hateful, bitter at the core.
  The world goes out—a candle in a gust.
We are in the dark, and terrified or tired,
  As those who move, with groping hands, to bed,
Rather than any joy we once desired
  We crave the long blind void of being dead.
Yet in a curving limb, a choric cry,
Beauty throbs stronger than the will to die.

The Sonnet

TRIUMPH

By Lizette Woodworth Reese

Heart's measure gave I. Is it all forgot?
  Winds cannot blow or beat it into dust,
  Or water cover it, or moth and rust
Corrupt it into aught that it was not.
For what is more remembered than the spring?
  The scarlet tulips running through the grass
  By a wet wall, and gone with but Alas?
(I know not how I know this old, old thing).
How now, poor one, that loved me for a space?
  Mine is the triumph of the tulip flower;
    My ruined April will not let you by;
To east my laughter, and to west my face.
  Housed with you ever, down some poignant hour
    There drifts the scrap of music that was I.

The Sonnet

DEAD MEN TELL NO TALES

By Haniel Long

They say that dead men tell no tales!

Except of barges with red sails
And sailors mad for nightingales;

Except of jongleurs stretched at ease
Beside old highways through the trees;

Except of dying moons that break
The hearts of lads who lie awake;

Except of fortresses in shade,
And heroes crumbled and betrayed.

But dead men tell no tales, they say!

Except old tales that burn away
The stifling tapestries of day:

Old tales of life, of love and hate,
Of time and space, and will, and fate.

Poetry: A Magazine of Verse

THROUGH A GATEWAY IN JAPAN

By Witter Bynner

A torii stood, three miles above the bay,
The gate of sacred ground,
And when I wandered through a little way,
I paused and found

No temple-steps, no lanterns and no shrine,
  Only divinity—
The solitary presence of a pine
  Facing the sea.

The Nation

MOLIÈRE'S HOUSEKEEPER

By Robert Gilbert Welsh

I wish that I had red-heeled shoon,
  And silken stockings clocked with gold,
Red velvet breeches or maroon,
  A cloak with broideries manifold.
A perfumed wig like Mascarille's
  A hat with plumes that sweep the air;
This would I doff, and click my heels,
  To you, the Servant of Molière.

To you, because your toil forgot,
  You listened to Barbouille's woe,
And dust and duty heeding not,
  Tartuffe you helped to overthrow.
At precieuse and damoiselle,
  You clapped your comely hands in turn;
Your anger burned at Sganarelle,
  The while you let your pate burn.

At creditors you stormed and swore,
  You smiled when La Fontaine came in;
You begged from his a louis d'or,
  The while he stroked your dimpled chin.
You cheered your master in the day
  Of empty purse and larder lean.

No doubt he put you in a play;
Come, tell me, are you not Dorine?

You frown, you blush, you pout, and so
In full confession you appear;
Hush! Do not let the critics know
That I have come upon you here.
Lest in their wisdom they declare,
('Tis merely fact they reason with),
Like Cleopatra you're not fair,
Like Pocahontas, you're a myth.

Dwell here, Dorine, and, late or soon,
In merry fancy waxing bold,
I'll wear the stockings and the shoon,
The cloak with broideries manifold,
The wig perfumed like Mascarille's,
The hat with plumes that sweep the air;
And this, I'll doff and click my heels
To you, the Servant of Molière.

Century Magazine

THIS TATTERED CATECHISM

By Katharine Lee Bates

This tattered catechism weaves a spell,
Invoking from the Long Ago a child
Who deemed her fledgling soul so sin-defiled
She practiced with a candle-flame at hell,
Burning small fingers that would still rebel
And flinch from fire. Forsooth not all beguiled
By hymn and sermon, when her mother smiled
That smile was fashioning an infidel.

"If I'm in hell," the baby logic ran,
"Mother will hear me cry and come for me.
If God says no——I don't believe He can
Say no to Mother." Then at that dear knee
She knelt demure, a little Puritan
Whose faith in love had wrecked theology.

The Sonnet

THE OLD PLOUGH-HORSE

By Mahlon Leonard Fisher

Worn-out and useless, lone, he stands and dreams,
Day after day, the long sweet summer through:
The last turf-ridge upturned, what is to do
Save watch the crow-hordes, or a hawk that screams
High o'er his master's dooryard, till it seems
The world was made a place for dreaming in?
Around him, daisy-wheels ecstatic spin,
And cattle splash, knee-deep, through cooling streams;
But he, inert, thought-wrapt, oblivious, drifts,
Dream-drawn, a-drowse, towards other fields than these,
Where first he felt the Spring's quick kiss, and seas
Of green about him swam. . . . His bent head lifts . . .
Like some sweet message caught from far-off lands,
He hears his mother whinny, where he stands!

The Sonnet

A BOY OF THE GHETTO

By Margaret Widdemer

He goes out with his Dreams
Through the dingy city square,

Purple- and silver-winged
  They go with him everywhere.

The quarreling hags at the windows
  Have voices unkind, unsweet,
But his Dreams have silver voices
  And starrily-slippered feet;

The workmen push on the pavement
  And laugh and curse as they go,
But he is far with his Dreams
  On a road they do not know;

He walks far off with the Dreams
  That whisper and sing beside,
And his face is glad and still
  And his eyes are burning-wide;

He goes out with his Dreams
  Through a golden wonder-place
With the light of God in his eyes
  And the peace of God in his face.

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY

By Mary Carolyn Davies

The princess sleeps
  And her hair grows long.
And her birds sleep
  Each with a song
Stuck in his throat;
  And over her bower,
  Hour after hour,
The buds sleep too.

The old cook sleeps.
  And the quiet braids
  Of the serving maids
Are gold in the sun.
  And in the yard
  The knights that guard
Sleep, every one;
  And, near the throne
The captains tall
Are sleeping all
  As though cut in stone;
Each cardinal
  Sleeps; and the king
  And the queen, with a ring
Of pages round.

And the world spins round.
  And the princess sleeps.

Thrust after thrust
  A prince hews strong—
At the hedge, and his hair,
And his face are fair.
(He is not the man
  Who will waken the princess,
His eyes will be gone
  And his bones will lie
And catch the light
  When the prince rides by
Whose kiss will stir
The world and her.
He is only one
  Of the hundred men
Who will dream of the princess
  Die, and then

Be a pathway white
For the last brave knight
To lead him straight
Where her lips await.)
And he sings,
As he feels the stings
  Of the thorns,
And he cries,
  To his page,
"Courage, lad!
Hew on and thrust,
If God is just
  We shall wake her
    And take her
Home to our kingdom.
You will be squire to her,
Walk at her bridle—
  She will be smiling
  And speaking out shyly
All that her heart holds,
  And singing a little
  For gladness of waking.
And I shall make Life
  Bow on its knees to her;
    I shall make Life
  Bow on its knees to her;—
Hew on and thrust;
If God is just,
  We shall find her
  And wake her
  And take her home."

In its iron hands
  For the miles around
A silence keeps

The forest deeps.
And the world spins round.
—And the princess sleeps.

FRUSTRATE

By Leslie Nelson Jennings

How futile are these scales in which we weigh
Pity and passion, and the spirit's need!
Words—and the veins of desperate peoples bleed!
Words—and a lark, and hedges white with may!
O must this rapture and this grief remain
Uncaptured in our silences? And must
We stand like stones, less lyrical than dust
That flowers beneath the benison of rain?

And if I say, "I love you," can you know,
Save by the urgent beating of my heart,
The flame that tears my baffled lips apart?
Poor symbols, cracked or broken long ago,
What witness can you bear that we have tried
To utter Beauty when our tongues were tied!

The Sonnet

STAIRWAYS

By Mahlon Leonard Fisher

Massive and grand are those old houses know,
Whose rails, too high for children's hands to reach,
Lend yet the ready help of friends to each
In age, to ease his hard ascent and slow.

Like brooks', their broad mahogany's soft flow;
  Like that of rivers the proud sweep of them,
  Holy because they knew the garments' hem
Of some we loved and lost in Long Ago. . . .
Ah, God! what is to soothe us—now our tears
  Are softly fall'n and Laughter lets no more
  Her silver lyric float from floor to floor—
Who climb these silent stairways with the years
  For mute companions, and, when those have passed,
  But stagger blindly down them at the last!

The Sonnet

IF ONLY THE DREAMS ABIDE

By Clinton Scollard

If things of earth must pass
Like the dews upon the grass,
Like the mists that break and run
At the forward sweep of the sun,
I shall be satisfied
If only the dreams abide.

Nay, I would not be shorn
Of gold from the mines of morn!
I would not be bereft
Of the last blue flower in the cleft,—
Of the haze that haunts the hills,
Or the moon that the midnight fills!
Still would I know the grace
Upon love's uplifted face,
And the slow, sweet joy-dawn there
Under the dusk of her hair.

I pray thee, spare me, Fate,
The woeful, wearying weight
Of a heart that feels no pain
At the sob of the autumn rain,
And takes no breath of glee
From the organ-surge of the sea,—
Of a mind where memory broods
Over songless solitudes!
I shall be satisfied
If only the dreams abide.

GARDEN-SONG

By James Branch Cabell

Farewell to Fields and Butterflies
And levities of Yester-year!
For we espy, and hold more dear,
The Wicket of our Destinies.

Whereby we enter, once for all,
A Garden which such Fruit doth yield
As, tasted once, no more Afield
We fare where Youth holds carnival.

Farewell, fair Fields, none found amiss
When laughter was a frequent noise
And golden-hearted girls and boys
Appraised the mouth they meant to kiss.

Farewell, farewell! but for a space
We, being young, Afield might stray,
That in our Garden nod and say,
Afield is no unpleasant place.

I THINK THERE IS NO END

By Mahlon Leonard Fisher

I think there is no end to anything
The touch of loveliness hath given soul:
That always, where doth impotently roll
Oblivion's ocean, does the dead bird sing,
And the mere beauty of his music bring—
Because it is unaltered evermore—
Remembered messengers to Memory's door;
And where wee fingers clung, wee fingers cling.
That high on some blest eminence endures
The daintily-made trail of a gone day—
Dew'd blooms betokening she passed that way,
And left to deathlessness her deathless lures;
That there, eternal, on eternal pines,
The broken gold of some dead sunset shines.

The Sonnet

NOVEMBER DUSK

By David Morton

When to your heart go home my long desires,
Home to your eyes at last my tireless gaze,—
Such time as lamps are lit and early fires,
To keep us from the chill autumnal grays,—
The world without appears a vasty space
Where thin and whispering winds cry overmuch:
But here is nearness, and your quiet face,
And usual words to say, and hands to touch.

A lean, black branch keeps tugging at the pane,
And past our door the harried hosts blow by:

The day goes out in gloom; a droning rain
  Sets in upon the roof. . . . And you and I
By our own hearth—for all the great world grieves—
Can smile to hear the forest drooping leaves.

The Sonnet

A NESTING LINNET

By Agnes Lee

Over the shreds of mist envalley'd
She and her nimble comrades flew.
The clearest sound the morning knew
Was hers, when, flashing down the blue,
A circle in the sun they rallied.

Since then what other eagernesses
Have lured her from the frolic's height,
What silences grown exquisite
In other mornings of the white,
Still birch-tree which a wonder dresses!

Within her beak a fallen feather,
An osier from the wind's carouse,
To make her house a fateful house
With symmetry how marvelous
She wove her garnerings together!

No outer import shall entrance her.
The comrades skim the hillock's brow
To maple bough, to willow bough,
And, near her darkened chamber, now
They call her, and she will not answer.

She was so shy, before, so fleeting,
So swift to vanish or elude.

Now she has come to softer mood,
Glad to be small and understood,
Her eyes our human eyes entreating.

As if to show us, trust emboldened,
The chancing of her hours,—the storm,
When her sweet eggs lay close and warm
Beneath her body,—and the swarm
Of passing leaves, where sunlight goldened;

As if to tell us love's endeavor,
The comfort of her hope, supreme
With all her heart's abounding theme.
But she can only dream her dream.
And this the miracle forever:

That such an atom of life's urging
Should from so large a patience weigh
The following of day on day,
With but a desperate dream to bay
The tidal world, loud-blustering, surging.

Dear Linnet, hodden-robed defender
Of a vague, wonderful To Be!
In her long vigilance I see
All earth's divine maternity
Held high upon a birch-tree slender,—

Till I would call, for love outleaping,
Each mother with a babe at breast,
Each ewe that folds her lamb to rest,
Each little bird that sits on nest,
Madonna of the Holy Keeping.

CAPTAIN GUYNEMER

By Florence Earle Coates

What high adventure, in what world afar,
Follows to-day,
Mid ampler air,
Heroic Guynemer?
What star,
Of all the myriad planets of our night,
Is by his glowing presence made more bright
Who chose the dangerous way,
Scorning, while brave men died, ignobly safe to stay?

Into the unknown Vast,
Where few could follow him, he passed,—
On to the gate—the shadowy gate—
Of the Forbidden,
Seeking the knowledge jealous Fate
Had still so carefully from mortals hidden.

With vision falcon-keen,
His eyes beheld what others had not seen,
And his soul, with as clear a gaze,
Pierced through each clouded maze
Straight to the burning heart of things, and knew
The lying from the true.

A dweller in Immensity,
Of naught afraid,
He saw the havoc Tyranny had made,—
Saw the relentless tide of War's advance,
And high of heart and free,
Vowed his young life to Liberty—
And France!

O Compiègne! be proud of him—thy son,—
The greatest of the eagle brood,—
Who with intrepid soul the foe withstood,
And rests, his victories won!
Mourn not uncomforted, but rather say:
His wings were broken, but he led the way
Where myriad stronger wings shall follow;
For Wrong shall not hold lasting sway,
To break the World's heart, nor betray
With cruel pledges hollow!

To us the battle draweth near.
We dedicate ourselves again,
Remembering, O Compiègne!
Thy Charioteer—
Thy peerless one, who died to make men free,
And in man's grateful heart shall live immortally!

Philadelphia Public Ledger

THE NAME

By Don Marquis

It shifts and shifts from form to form,
  It drifts and darkles, gleams and glows;
It is the passion of the storm,
  The poignance of the rose;
Through changing shapes, through devious ways,
  By noon or night, through cloud or flame,
My heart has followed all my days
  Something I cannot name.

In sunlight on some woman's hair,
  Or starlight in some woman's eyes,

Or in low laughter, smothered where
Her red lips wedded mine,
My heart hath known and thrilled to know,
This unnamed presence that it sought;
And when my heart hath found it so,
"Love is the name," I thought.

Sometimes when sudden afterglows
In futile glory storm the skies,
Within their transient gold and rose
The secret stirs and dies;
Or when the trampling morn walks o'er
The troubled seas, with feet of flame,
My awed heart whispers, "Ask no more,
For beauty is the name!"

Or dreaming in old chapels where
The dim aisles pulse with murmurings
That part are music, part are prayer—
(Or rush of hidden wings)
Sometimes I lift a startled head
To some saint's carven countenance,
Half fancying that the lips have said,
"All names mean God, perchance!"

Dreams and Dust

MOONLIGHT

By Theodosia Garrison

When girls sell posies beside the curb
And the days grow long again,
The white moon spreads her silver net
Over the dreams of men.

And he is unsnared of souls alone
  Who moves in a present bliss,—
Step by step with his own true love
  With the touch of her hand on his.

But over the hearts of lonely men
  The silver seine is thrown,
And across the tide of the empty nights
  It draws them on to their own.

And some go back to the carnival
  Where the fiddles play shrill and high,
And some are drawn to a love to be
  And most to a love gone by.

Smart Set

SOUVENIR

By Muna Lee

I remember you because of a little hill
  Where the violets grew thicker than the grass,
And through my memory flames and whistles still
  A flock of red-winged blackbirds we saw pass.

Because of a rain-filled night I remember you,
  And a tree we came on suddenly in the fall
And a vague horizon that broke and foamed in blue
  —But I do not remember any words of yours at all.

Smart Set

THE MALLOWS

By George Edward Woodberry

How delicate they stand above the box,
  Against the fragile breath of summer seen,
  Within the garden's walls of emerald green,
Dull, cloistral hedges, and tall hollyhocks
Starring the flowery distance! airy flocks
  Of veinèd petals hover there, and lean,
  Turned earthward, toward us, in the hush and sheen,—
Our mallows, once more in the well-loved walks!

Oh, blest succession of the lengthening years,
  That brings again our annual holiday,
And beautifies this season of our tears
  With former sights, and the familiar ray
Shining upon us from above the spheres,
  While flower and shrub keep the old heavenly way!

The Sonnet

THE SOURCE OF BEAUTY

By Charles Wharton Stork

Far down through hidden fissures of the earth
  Strike the thin-fibred roots, for from the cold
  And age-fed richness of the nether mould
They draw the strength whereby the buds have birth.
We only see the blossoming tide of mirth
  Up-foaming to the sunlight's wand of gold;
  Yet April's valor thrives on deeds of old,
And faded years give brightest flowers their worth.

And so with Beauty. Does the Midas wand
  Of genius waken into golden bloom
    A casual impulse of unfostered bowers?
No, not one laughing petal may expand
  Unless from ancient forces nursed in gloom.
    We see no roots; we only see the flowers.

The Sonnet

TO SCIENCE

By George Sterling

And if thou slay Him, shall the ghost not rise?
  Yea! if thou conquer Him thine enemy,
  His specter from the dark shall visit thee—
Invincible, necessitous and wise.
The tyrant and mirage of human eyes,
  Exhaled upon the spirit's darkened sea,
  Shares He thy moment of eternity,
Thy truth confronted ever with His lies.

Thy banners gleam a little, and are furled;
  Against thy turrets surge His phantom tow'rs;
    Drugged with His opiates the nations nod,
  Refusing still the beauty of thine hours;
And fragile is thy tenure of this world
    Still haunted by the monstrous ghost of God.

The Sonnet

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